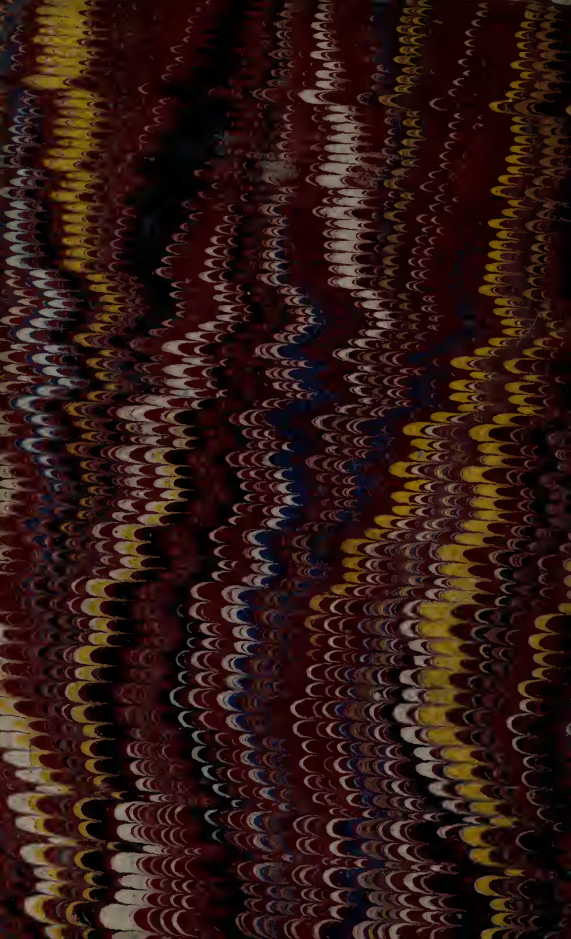
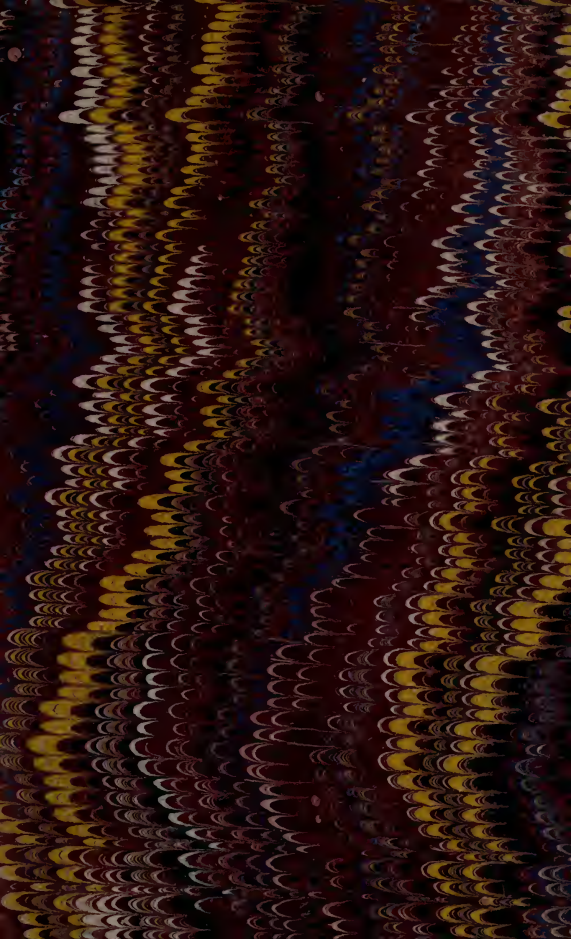




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JULIAN







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JULIAN:
OR,
SCENES IN JUDEA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
LETTERS FROM PALMYRA AND ROME.

WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS,
LONDON AND EDINBURGH.

1860.



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NOTE.

To the present work, which appeared at New York in 1841, the following explanatory note was prefixed :

“ These ‘ Scenes,’ it is thought proper to say, are purely fictitious, with no foundation whatever in historical fact, except where an obvious agreement will be found with the Scriptures.* Wherever the story deviates from the straight course of the New Testament record, it is to be taken as imaginary—illustrative merely of the period chosen.

For the part assigned to Herod there is a show of authority ; and it will be found to conflict with the conjecture of those who, to meet the difficulty presented by Luke, suppose the tetrarch to have been absent from his dominions, during all the early part of our Saviour’s ministry, engaged in a war with the king of Arabia.

In respect to Scripture antiquities, no more has been attempted than not to do them violence. Geographical and topographical details will be found to agree essentially with the best authorities.”



JULIAN;

OR,

SCENES IN JUDEA.

PRAISE to the God of Abraham: the locusts are flown. The land which they found flourishing and verdant as a garden, they have changed to the barrenness of a desert. The cities and the villages, but now so full of people, are become the region of desolation and death. Even the very city and house of God are level with the dust, and the ploughshare has gone over them. And here upon the hill of Olives I sit, a living witness of the ruin. By reason of the wonderful compassions of God, which never fail, I am escaped as a bird from the net of the fowler: yet I take little joy in this; for why should the days of one like me be lengthened out, when the mighty and excellent of the land are cut off? I rather rejoice in this, that the spoiler is gone, the armies of the alien have ceased to devour, and they who are fled, and hidden in caves and dens of the rocks, may come forth again to inhabit the land and build up the waste places. A multitude, which no man could number, have fallen before the edge of the sword, or by famine, and the air is full of the pestilential vapours that steam up from their rotting carcases. But a greater multitude remains; and it may well be that, ere many years have passed, they shall fill the land as before, and, gathered into one by him who, though long delaying, will come, pay back, and more, the measure they have received. That time will surely come. Even as the Assyrian could not finally destroy, but

the hand of the Almighty was put forth, and the city and the temple grew again from their ruins to a greater glory than before, so shall it be now. The Roman triumph shall be short. Messiah shall yet appear, and Jerusalem, clothed in her beautiful garments, shall sit upon her hills, the joy and crown of the whole earth.

But for me, my eyes shall not behold it. Before that day these aged limbs shall rest in the sepulchres of Beth-Harem, and these walls will have fallen and mingled with the common earth. It is not to-morrow, nor the day after, that the kingdom shall come. Impatient Israel will not wait the appointed hour; she will not remember that with the Lord a thousand years are as a day, and a day as a thousand years. She will reign to-day, or never. It is her mad haste which has drawn upon her this wide destruction. Deceivers, and they who have deceived themselves, fools and wicked men, have led her to the precipice, down which she hath fallen, and now lies, as a potter's vessel, broken in fragments: and I, alas! am not clear in the great transgression. The rage which filled the people was in my heart also. I, too, gave heed to lying words, and bent my knee before him who, in my darkness, seemed to me as in very truth the king of Israel, and bound myself to his chariot wheels. May he whose compassions are infinite, pity and forgive his servant. It is with my soul low in the dust before him, that I turn to the long past, and remember the early errors of my life.

And why will ye of Rome press upon me the unwelcome task? My kinsmen might well forego any pleasure they may reap, for the pain that will be my only harvest: yet not my only harvest. The memory of the days spent where Judith and Onias dwelt, will bring with it pleasant thoughts, if many bitter and self-reproachful also. Happily, of this portion of my life, of which you are chiefly desirous to hear, the record already exists; from which I need but draw in such fragments as shall impart all that I

may care to reveal. That record lies before me just as it went forth from my full heart, and was poured into the bosom of that more than woman, my protecting angel rather, Naomi the blessed. As the scenes of my earlier life rise before me out of these leaves, distinct as the outlines of these barren hills, so too does the image of my mother come up out of the obscurity of the past, and stand before me, clear and beautiful to the eye, as when clothed in flesh. It was to thee, thou true mother in Israel, that I made myself visible and plain to read as a parchment scroll, and from thee in return received those holy counsels, charged with a divine wisdom, which were a pillar of light to my path ; and, had I heeded them, had saved me from every error, as they did from more than I can now remember or recount.

Concerning my birth and childhood in Rome, and the years which preceded my departure for the East, it needs not that I speak ; for of that part of my life enough is known, and I can take no pleasure in re-perusing it. From the letters and other writings transmitted to me long since by my mother from Rome, I now draw what shall give you a somewhat lively picture of those days in Judea, about which you are chiefly desirous to hear.

LETTER I.

I THUS addressed my mother soon after reaching Cæsarea :—

You who know your son so well, will not doubt that I took my departure from Antioch with pain. Nowhere since I passed the gates of Rome have I been entertained with such magnificence. Nowhere have the hours proved themselves so short-lived. After the dulness of Athens, and the worse than dulness of Smyrna, Ephesus, and Rhodes, it was refreshing to witness the noise and stir of the mistress of the East. So frequent were the theatres, baths, and porticos,

the shows, the games, the combats of wild beasts, that I felt myself almost in the Elysium of my own Rome. What added, too, as you will believe, to my happiness, was this, that I passed everywhere for a Roman of undoubted Roman blood ; or, at least, if my descent were seen, with a civility which seems native to these orientals, the knowledge of it was not betrayed by a word or look. I perceive you to smile at this, as also to utter a few words expressive of a gentle contempt for an unworthy scion of an ancient house. The contempt from you I can bear, but the smile by which you seem to enjoy what you are pleased to term my credulity, I must say and believe is wasted ; for, more than once have I been assured by some of my own tribe, that, but for a something in my eye, they should not suspect me to be other than a Roman. Neither, my mother, was this flattery ; it was from some incapable of that meanest vice—from my real friends. But whoever were so blind as to take me for a Roman, you may be assured I was not careful to undeceive them. I enjoyed the perfect felicity while I might ; and the dream was undisturbed during the whole of my sojourn there, except in a single instance, when, once as I was walking in front of the baths of Tiberius, I saw approaching from an opposite point the lordly Drusus, who, as I gave signs of saluting him, turned his face in another direction, and swept along without recognising me. What think you of that ? At this distance I can see your colour change. But if you even feel the insult, who live so shut out from the great world, how much more must I who am in it. I think your censure is too sharp upon me, when at such moments I, somewhat hastily perhaps, wish the twelve tribes had found the fate of Pharaoh, seeing that to little else than scorn and curses, hatred and oppression, are they born who come of their lineage. Willingly would I renounce all the wisdom I have ever found in Moses and the prophets, for a little of that equal honour in the eyes of men, which more, methinks, than questions of philosophy or religion, concerns a man's

well-being. My eye is not far reaching enough to discern a single advantage in the position the Jew fills in this great theatre of life. He cherishes in his soul his faith, which he holds to be nobler and purer than that of Pythagoras or Cicero. But however much nobler and purer in his own eye, when did other than a Jew so esteem it? Who ever has heard of Romans, Greeks, or Egyptians becoming Jews, and receiving—save in numbers most inconsiderable—the Jewish faith? Yet is it likely that through so many ages a religion given of God should have remained in the world, and not have convinced men of its divinity? I, alas! have not even a conviction of its truth, to sustain me under this burden of contempt and reproach. I am a Jew outwardly, carrying the signs of my descent and origin in my face and form, branded in by the hand that made me, and by the hand that reared me; and this I cannot help. But with readiness would I lose one half my limbs, if from what remained these scars and seams of ignominy were fairly erased. You say that in Rome I mix freely with the Roman youth, that I sit at their tables, and they at mine, that I join them at the games, and in every amusement of our city life. It is true; yet still I am a Jew. I am beloved of many because I am Julian; yet by the very same am I abhorred because I am a Jew. The Roman beggar who takes my gold—for gold is gold—begs pardon of the gods, and as he turns the corner, scours the coin upon the sand. Yet, my mother, I see not why one people should thus proscribe another; nor do I look upon the wrong but with indignation. You justly accuse me with indifference to the religion of my fathers. But I have never beheld with patience the slights, insults, and oppressions which, by the stronger, have been heaped upon the weaker; nor, truly, when I reflect, can I see why the worship of a people should be charged upon them as a crime. It is these injuries which have roused within me, at times, the Jew; however, for the most part in my search after pleasure, I have been

too ready to forget all but what ministered directly to that end. If thou art filled with wonder at so serious a vein in me, I will soon give thee the reasons thereof; but let me first speak of my passage hither, and of that which happened immediately on my arrival.

I left Antioch, as I have said, with regret. At the mouth of the Orontes I embarked in a trader bound to Cæsarea, and then to Joppa and Alexandria. We at first were driven out to sea by an east wind, and ran quite along the shores of Cyprus; but this soon subsiding, we crossed over again to the Syrian coast, and were afterwards enabled to keep our vessel so near—the breezes being gentle, and from a safe quarter—that I enjoyed a continued prospect of the country, with as much distinctness and satisfaction, methinks, as if I had been travelling by land; at least with distinctness enough, for every pleasure of this sort is increased by a certain degree of obscurity and dimness. Painters understand this, and over their works throw a sort of haze by some mysterious process of their divine art, which imparts to them their principal charm. No prospect and no picture is beautiful which is clear and sharp, as if cut in metal. Truth itself is to me improved by a veil of this same mistiness thrown around it. But if any fault is to be found with this Syrian atmosphere, it is, that of this all-involving dimness there is something too much; to that degree, indeed, that the eye is often cheated of the distant features of the landscape—the mountains which, drawn upon the chart before us, we know to be not far distant, not too far for the eye to reach with ease, being cut off entirely by this purple wall of partition. Happily, as we drew near the port of Berytus, beyond which lay the mountains of Libanus and Anti-Libanus, there was not so much of the quality of which I speak in the air as to deprive us of a view of their summits, crowned with their snowy caps, filling the whole eastern horizon. It was a magnificent mountain scene, a fitting vestibule, you will say, my mother, through which to enter the

holy land of Moses and Abraham. It was, I am obliged to confess, with emotions such as I had never experienced before, that I found myself now for the first time gazing upon the shores of this wonderful people, the home of my fathers. It was beautiful to the eye, as we skirted the coast, as one long continued garden. The rich agriculture of the husbandman was pushed out to the very sands of the sea-beach, and every cape, and promontory, and lofty peak showed, sparkling in the sun, the white walls of a village or some insulated dwelling, proving how thickly peopled must be the country which could spare its inhabitants for the cultivation of spots naturally barren and inhospitable, but now by the hand of industry changed to a soil not less fertile than that of Italy. I could not but wish that, if it were decreed I must be a Jew, I had been born and had lived in these sunny regions ; and, in truth, that it had pleased heaven to have retained my parents on their native soil, seeing that there, among our own hills and plains, we could not but have been a people more respected than we now are, or ever can be, wandering over the earth, forcing ourselves upon every nation and every city, unwelcome guests—among them, but never of them.

We had not long lost sight of the ridges of Lebanon, when we passed successively those ancient seats of opulence and renown, Sidon and Tyre ; then doubling a lofty cape, formed by a part of Mount Carmel shooting into the sea, a few hours' sail revealed a distant prospect of Cæsarea. As we drew near, I was astonished at the magnificence of the port. It is a harbour of an immense capacity as to vessels of all kinds and sizes, yet has it been formed wholly by the hand of art. The shore presents at this part of the coast an almost even line of sandy banks running from south to north, with none of those alternate projections and inlets which are proper for the security of ships against both the current of the sea and storms of wind. Wherefore, at the cost of an im-

mense sum, did Herod the Great construct this artificial basin—larger than the famous one at Athens—wherein vessels can ride in perfect safety, protected especially against the violence of the southern gales, which in this region are chiefly to be feared. The water is enclosed by a mole in the shape of a half moon, which, bending round from the south, presents its open mouth to the north, whose gentle winds allow vessels at all times to obtain an entrance. This mole, wholly of marble, and of enormous proportions, offers to the eye on the outer side a continuous range of edifices,* also of marble, which seemed to me palaces as I approached at a distance, but are designed for the reception of merchandise; while on the inner side, for its entire length, it affords a broad and spacious pavement, where the ships are lightened of their burdens, and, lashed to iron rings or pillars, ride securely till their cargoes for another voyage have been received. At the entrance of the harbour, and at the very extremity of the mole, there rises a lofty tower, upon the summit of which you behold a Colossus of Asia; while on the opposite side of the entrance, upon a similar tower which terminates the shorter arm of the mole, stands a Colossus of Rome, of the like huge proportions. Towers of the same height and size shoot up along the whole length of this vast wall, intended partly as an additional feature of magnificence, and partly as a defence against the assaults of an enemy. From the inner shore of this wide basin—which for vastness seems a lake—rises by a gradual ascent the city, the streets which lead from the water being crossed at regular intervals by others of the same width, which run in an opposite direction.

As our vessel, its decks thronged with passengers, floated, driven by a gentle northern breeze, within the embrace of this spacious haven, and the crowd of shipping, the long range of lofty towers, the city with its palaces, temples, and theatres, all opened at once to my view, I thought I had never seen anything of

a more impressive grandeur. I could with difficulty persuade myself that this was a city of Judea ; that, where I had expected to behold a barbarous and uncultivated people, I should thus meet, instead, all the signs of elegance and taste which had marked the cities of Greece and Syria, or are to be observed in the chief towns of Italy. I remembered, indeed, the magnificence and boundless wealth of Herod ; but I do not think, my mother, that even you yourself are aware of the greatness of his achievements, not only here in Cæsarea, but, as I have heard, in many other of the cities of Judea. From some of my own nation, who have been fellow-passengers, and with whom I have enjoyed much pleasant intercourse, I have learned this ; and, in addition, more of the present condition and recent history of the country, than I could have obtained from any sources whatsoever in Rome. Of these things I shall impart what knowledge I have gathered at my future leisure. Let me, at present, return to our arrival.

We thus floated into this beautiful harbour, making our way slowly along amongst vessels of all nations, which, like ourselves, were coming in, or departing, or riding securely at their anchors. The noise and confusion were scarcely less than in the Tiber. I enjoyed the scene greatly, as I do everywhere whatever leads to uproar and contention. Particularly was I delighted with the quarrels which arose among the sailors, when the vessels either could not easily pass each other, or became entangled, when it frequently came to blows, and more or fewer were over-set into the water. If they who were thus thrust overboard did not readily recover themselves by clinging to the sides of the vessel, or laying hold upon some rope, the combatants then ceased till the drowning men were drawn up again. Yet are many daily lost in these rude encounters ; and I myself saw blows given and taken which seemed to me more than enough to demolish the head on which they fell. But when the governor of a people is full of quarrel, and

violence, and injustice, how can anything better be expected from the very lowest of the populace? As I stood watching what was thus going on about me, I was surprised to find ourselves suddenly brought up against a vessel which, from the bellows that proceeded from it, I perceived to be crowded with wild beasts; and, indeed, the deck was covered with their cages. As I expressed to one who stood by me, and with whom I had had frequent intercourse during the voyage, my wonder to see such a cargo making its way into a port of Judea, where the customs and religion of the people differ so widely from those of Rome and other heathen cities, he replied, that they who knew anything of the manner in which Judea had been governed by Herod, and after him by the Ethnarch, would see, in what had occasioned surprise to me, nothing but what agreed exactly with the now altered character of the population. I answered, that I was obliged to confess great ignorance of all that related to the Jews, as I was Roman born, and my reading and studies had lain in a quite different direction.

At this flourish, which I had hoped should pass with him, he quickly rejoined, "You may be Roman born, but if so, your Hebrew blood wears well, for the Jew looks out at your eyes as plainly as the Roman out of your cloak and your speech. Never hope to play Roman with those eyes in your head."

I was somewhat taken down, as you may suppose, by this; but I put the best face upon the matter, and said that I could not but acknowledge that, although I had been born in Rome, my parents had removed thither from the upper part of Judea. My education had, however, been so completely Roman, owing to my father's early abandonment of all outward observance of his faith, that it was strictly true, as I had stated, that my ignorance was great of all that related to the present condition and late history of the country of my ancestors.

"The more the pity," replied my companion, "that

a son of Abraham should be found to deny his country and his ancestry, and make a boast of what should be his shame—that he knows nothing of the people from whom he sprung. It is to such traitors,” and his dark eye sparkled like a living coal, “that Judea owes her slavery and her apostacy—her slavery to a foreign yoke, and her apostacy from the faith and the customs of the early days of our history. The people are no longer Jews, but Herodians, Greeks, Romans, anything—anything but Jews. Is this a city of Jews we are entering? It stands on the soil of Judea, but it belongs not to the rightful occupants of the soil. Cæsarea is first Greek, then Roman, last, and least, Jewish. But a word in your ear—the Jews that are there are of the true stuff. They are zealous for the law and for liberty. A little thing would rouse them to the defence of either, or both.”

As he said this, our further conversation was suddenly interrupted by our vessel coming into violent contact with that containing the cargo of wild animals, which caused them to utter their savage cries with terrific uproar; and to this was added the oaths and shouts of the sailors and the pilots, each laying upon the other the fault of the encounter, and all preparing to go from words to blows. This issue was, however, happily avoided, and the vessels being soon free of each other, we proceeded on our way.

“These animals,” then resumed the Jew, “about which you wondered that they should be here, are destined to the games instituted by Herod in commemoration of the building of Cæsarea, and which return every fifth year. On the third day from this they commence; and if you are a stranger in this part of the world, and would observe the customs of a new people, you will be well repaid for the delay by remaining and witnessing them.”

I said, “that I should certainly do so; that I was abroad for the single purpose of seeing the people of various regions, and obtaining such knowledge as might in this way be gathered without much expense

of labour or thought; that although, as he had seen, I was no Jew, except in the misfortune of having descended from that tribe, I was yet especially desirous of dwelling a while among them, as, if not a polite or powerful nation, they certainly were a remarkable one, and well merited the observation of a curious traveller."

A mingled look of scorn and rage was the only response I received at first for this speech. He paced the deck of the vessel a few moments, and I supposed would not deign to hold further communication with me. He, however, soon returned to my side, having swallowed his indignation.

"Young man," said he, "I forgive the levity of your speech, for the reason that I well deserved it, for persuading you to be present at heathen sports on a Jewish soil. But, in truth, they have been now so long celebrated, that they have become a part of the life of the people, and it is only a few of the stricter sort who condemn them or keep back from them. It had agreed better with my real opinions, however, had I denounced them, as I should have done, and warned thee against them. But you will use in this your liberty. I now wish to say that, in spite of your enmity towards your own people, I have conceived a regard for you, and while you shall sojourn in Cæsarea, offer you my house and home; and once beneath the roof of a true son of Abraham, I will not doubt that your long perished affection for the land of your fathers may be revived, and that we may send you home a Jew in nature, as, forgive me, you are in outward semblance."

"Were it only for an apprehension of such lamentable issue," I rejoined, "I should feel compelled to decline your hospitable request. May I never be more of that of which I am already too much. But beside this, I am bound in obedience to the wishes of my mother, to seek out the dwelling of the widow of Sameas, the wine merchant, with whom it is my purpose to abide, if, indeed, she yet lives and can receive

me; for it is very many years since we have heard of her welfare, and know not now whether she be even an inhabitant of Cæsarea."

To this the stranger replied with vivacity, "The widow of Sameas! Ah, the Lord be thanked for directing your course to that haven. She is a true mother in Israel. She still lives and dwells in Cæsarea, and is of good estate. Sameas was no idler, and when he died, his widow and children inherited the fruits of his industry; and but for the unjust exactions of Pilate, their wealth had been second to that of few within the walls. As it is, they enjoy competence and more. But the dearest wealth of the house is the zeal for the law and the rights of Judea which fires the souls of Philip and Anna, the son and daughter of the merchant. The best I can wish thee, therefore, my young Roman, is, that thou mayest dwell a space in the house of Sameas, for if there be but a drop of Jewish blood in thy body, I fear not but their ardour will so warm and swell it, that it shall fill all thy veins."

We now separated, the vessel having reached the spot where she was to be secured, and the passengers making ready to depart. The Jew, my companion, took leave of me, after first directing me in such a manner that I could not fail to find the dwelling of the widow of the wine merchant. It was with little satisfaction that I looked forward to a residence with a family of Jewish zealots. It was enough, I thought, that I had borne so long, and with such patience, the reproaches of my own mother; quite enough that, in addition, I had just been exposed to the vituperations of a fanatic, from whom I had happily escaped alive, without being now for many days—how many I could not know—shut up, without the possibility of escape, in the very hot-bed of Judaism. What a fate for me! I had almost resolved to take ship, without so much as landing, for Alexandria, when the image of your sorrowful and rebuking countenance, my mother, presented itself before me, and I

turned dutifully toward the quarter of the city where dwelt the merchant. To reach it I must pass through the central parts of the city, to where it first joins the country. The place I sought I easily found ; for Cæsarea, dear mother, although the capital of Judea, is not so large as Rome. And, moreover, as I passed along, I could not but judge that it would scarce be so enduring, seeing that, though presenting everywhere the marks of newness, it presents also everywhere the signs of premature decay. A city built in a day is very likely to last but a day ; and all around are Herod's piles of building, whether in the form of theatre, temple, market-place, or quay—already perceived to yield to the effects of time. Even the palace of the governor, which erewhile was the residence of Herod himself, is in parts of it ruinous, through the falling asunder of the ill cemented masonry. Pilate could hardly trust to his walls to defend him against any rising of the citizens. But he is in little danger at any time, as I think, considering what the population of the city is, notwithstanding the enmity of the Jewish portion of the inhabitants.

The dwelling of Sameas, after traversing the entire breadth of the city, I at length reached. A beggar issuing from a gateway, laden with the proofs of the benevolence to which he had successfully appealed, was the only person of whom I could inquire which of the dwellings near me was that of the widow of the wine merchant. He answered, pointing to his sack of commodities which he was bearing away, "From whom but the widow of Sameas do the poor of Cæsarea depart laden in this fashion ? Pass yonder threshold, and thou shalt find thyself in paradise."

So saying, and waving his arm with dignity, he turned away to count over his stolen treasures. The kind-hearted we always approach with confidence, so that with a quicker pace I passed the gateway, and entered a spacious garden, in the centre of which, almost buried beneath overhanging foliage and flowers of every variety of form and hue, stood the dwelling

of the wine merchant. A slave now immediately approached, saying he would conduct me to that part of the house where I should see those for whom I sought. As he led me on, and I observed the great beauty of the spot, and the many tokens of wealth and refinement in the garden and in the dwelling, the forms and proportions of which were now distinctly to be seen through the opening trees, I found myself growing to a more complacent humour, and better disposed, than when I left the vessel, to greet with some appearance of warmth the widow of the virtuous Sameas. It is true I saw statue neither of god nor goddess, nor vase of marble curiously wrought with nymphs and fawns, and young, dancing, half-drunk Bacchuses ; nor did the imperial forms of Augustus and Tiberius greet my eye, as they do everywhere in street and garden, market-place and shop, in Rome. So that from art much was wanting to give the truest grace to the picture before me ; but nature seemed to have made good all defect of this sort by her superior charms ; and I was made soon to forget what at first struck me as a want, by the novelty and surpassing richness and variety of plants, trees, and shrubs, both native and foreign, which met my eye. I lingered to admire, and would at that moment rather have remained among the beauties of nature, than have gone farther to encounter the living beauties of these half-barbarian regions, but I was civilly urged on by the attending slave, and so, in a few moments, ushered into the presence of the widow and her daughter.

They were seated in a large and lofty portico, whose arches, overhung with flowers, opened immediately into the garden, while here and there, as the trees permitted, were seen gleaming through the light blue waters of the Mediterranean. The mother was occupied in some labour of the needle, adjusting or repairing what seemed to me some military garment ; the daughter in arranging in groups, apparently to please her own eye, some flowers which lay spread in rich profusion upon a marble table. I may suppose that

I was taken to be some new applicant for the alms of the rich and benevolent widow, as the daughter, to my vexation, did not raise her head at my approach, and the mother did but rise and move toward me with a stately step, yet, I must add, with an expression of gentleness in the countenance.

When I had finished my introductory narrative, and had declaimed of yourself and myself, and of the whole tribe of Alexanders, from those of Beth-Harem to those of Rome, I was one by one greeted with many smiles of welcome; and before I had ended, was seated between the mother and daughter, both apparently pleased to entertain a stranger from Rome, but still more, perhaps, one of our ancient and honourable house. The daughter, as I had spoken, turned and looked upon me, and at first I thought I had never seen anything quite so dark and forbidding as her countenance; but when, as I proceeded, it came to be lighted up with emotion and with smiles, it at length put on a more agreeable aspect, though still so dark an olive I thought I had never seen upon the skin, nor eyes so large and black set in the human head. Among all who have thronged your house from Judea, my mother, one so extremely Jewish as this young Israelite was never seen there.

When I had further satisfied the widow concerning yourself, giving her so minute an account of your life and character, that, I fear, some part at least must have been invention rather than fact, and then had replied to all the questions which were put to me, with a real interest in public affairs, concerning Tiberius and the present power of Sejanus, the mother said, that she had hoped the provinces would be more fortunate than the capital; and indeed had hardly thought it possible that, while there was one like Tiberius in Rome, another like Pilate could have been found for Judea; but, lately especially, it was only too plain that we were to be the victims of a tyrannic power hardly less than they of Rome.

I replied, "that where the head of a great empire

was such a one as Tiberius, it was a natural consequence that all in society like him should float upon the surface. They would crawl forth from the hiding places of their vices, and grow great in the sunshine of their mighty example and patron. Men like your governor are common enough now in Rome, though not always are they fortunate enough to rise into place; for though the emperor himself chooses to play the tyrant, he is not so ready as one might suppose to multiply himself in his subordinates."

"Is it not singular, then," said Anna, "that he persists in retaining Pilate in his office, notwithstanding his cruelties, and the enmity of the people?"

"He may do that," I answered, "in agreement with a sentiment he has been heard to utter, that to change a cruel or rapacious governor of a province, is but to send a new and hungry robber to take the place of one who has already gorged himself, and is likely to rest and sleep, as it is the nature of an animal to do when he has filled himself; just as the poor wretch covered with sores begged that the flies already feeding might not be driven away, since it would only make room for a hungrier swarm."

"That," said the young Jewess, "is indeed the sentiment of a heartless tyrant, of one who is not only indifferent to the misery he occasions, but can make a jest of it. If Rome bears patiently with the greater monster, I trust that Judea will not with the lesser."

"Take heed, my daughter," said the widow, "how your righteous indignation finds too loud and warm an expression. There is some truth in the saying of Tiberius. We may drive away Pilate only to be cursed with a worse man."

"That were impossible," cried the daughter.

"Were you ever in Rome?" said I.

"No," replied the young girl.

"I thought as much. Believe me, there are worse men in Rome than Pilate. I know those in the city; men, too, of note, who, were they here, would put to open shame the deeds of your present governor.

Tiberius has proved already a rare schoolmaster. His pupils abound in the capital and throughout Italy."

"And Caprea is just at present the schoolroom," said Anna.

"Yes, and too small for the scholars who crowd it. But if you can pardon my ignorance, of what have you to complain here in Cæsarea? I have noticed on my arrival, and as I passed through your city, only signs of prosperity and peace; nor since I left Rome, nor, indeed, before for a long time, have I heard anything of evils which you are suffering under."

"Ah," said Anna with animation, "I know how it is with you Roman Jews. You grow to be so in love with the greatness of your adopted country, that you are soon strangely forgetful of that from which you sprang. The wrongs and sufferings of Judea, which cry to heaven, are not heard in the din of great events and the whirl of pleasure. Many of you, so am I told, deny your name and country, and put on the dress and take the name of Roman. Pray heaven it is not so with you, for your face is honest, and——" In her earnestness she suddenly paused, and her dark skin was covered with blushes, that made her for the moment beautiful. Her eye fell upon my Roman dress, and she perceived that she had involved me in the condemnation she had pronounced.

Almost enjoying her confusion, I said, I confess my recreancy. But you will judge me with more lenity, I am sure, when I tell you how odious a thing it is to bear the name of Jew in Rome. Were one born a full-grown man, he might, perhaps, find philosophy enough to steel him against the taunts and gibes of those about him. But with only the tender sensibilities of a child, it is quite too hard a yoke to bear. Roman boys taught me early to both hate and despise the religion of my fathers, which, as all the treatment I received on every side, and all the language I heard assured me, would procure for me nothing better than contempt and insult. My father, too, had renounced all of Judaism that he could. He

never entered a synagogue, he observed none of the Jewish rites or festivals, his phrases were set to Roman measures, and his outward homage was paid with scrupulousness to pagan institutions; though that he despised them in his heart as much as he hated his own belief, I do not doubt. Gold, gold was his only god; and he cared not for man, but as he might help or hinder him in that only worship of his heart. Do not, my friends, accuse me of filial impiety for these sentiments. For a parent who provided for me only gold, and whose only legacy was gold, I can feel no very lively emotions of gratitude. I received from him none of the signs of a parent's love. He hardly knew me. As he moved in the morning to the narrow vault in Rome's vast centre, where he amassed his riches, with his eyes looking inwards upon some new scheme of wealth, blind and deaf to all beside and without him, he would pass me in the street as a stranger, though his eyes fell directly on me; and if I made some childish advances, which I soon learned not to do, a frown and a rebuke for a troublesome vagrant that I was, was all that I ever received. As I grew into years I grew no nearer to him, nor he to me. Whatever was needful to my education in all the wisdom of the Romans or the Greeks, was bountifully supplied; nor was I denied that, whatever it might be, which wealth could procure, which was thought necessary to place me on a level with the young men of the capital in any pursuit or pleasure. But to my father's counsels or business I was never admitted. Of a single thought of his mind, or anxiety of his heart, I was never permitted to be a sharer. Here I was an annoyance and a hindrance. How can you wonder, then, I added, that I grew up, not a Jew, but a Roman? or how can you greatly blame me? You, my mother, will not, I am sure, condemn me for this freedom. You, more than I, know how to justify it. But when I had said these things, I then drew another picture of my other parent, and showed how all your endeavours in an opposite direction could

not but fail, with all Rome and my father against you.

As I paused, the widow of Sameas said, "It is not strange, such being your nurture, that Rome rather than Judea should possess your heart, nor that you should be ignorant of the condition of what to you must ever have been a place so obscure or unknown as Cæsarea. Let us hope that, being now here, a witness as you will be of our frequent oppressions and insults, the love of Judea, which, sure I am, you drew in with your mother's milk, will revive and unite you to her interests. Not that I am an advocate for open resistance; that, as I deem, were madness itself. We can never oppose Rome but we must be crushed. I mean only that, by a wise and manly perseverance in an assertion of our just rights, both before the governor and the emperor at Rome, we may at length, perhaps, obtain some redress, and the removal of some burdens which weigh upon us with a weight too heavy to be borne."

"But your numbers," I said, "must be so great, I should judge as a stranger, as to be a sufficient protection against lawless violence or rapacity on the part of the Roman governor. With a military force not more numerous than his, he must be weaker than the united populace."

"Ah," replied Anna, "there is the evil we suffer under. We are not united. Even among ourselves there are those who judge very differently of the measures we ought to pursue. Some are for giving blow for blow, while others counsel moderation and forbearance. And then, do you not know it? the greater part of our population is Greek, and the Greek is an enemy more bitter than even the Roman. Quarrels continually arise, and blood is often shed. The streets of Cæsarea have I seen more than once, young as I am, to run with the blood of those who have perished in these wild combats—the Greeks always in league with the Romans. Even now—but

see, here comes Philip, and with ill news too, if his face may be read."

The young man, her brother, entered with haste as Anna spoke, his countenance expressive of anything but agreeable intelligence. He was above the common height, of a proud and lofty air, and a very athlete in his firm and well-knit joints and massy limbs; while his countenance, dark and lowering, made you think him one designed by nature for scenes of strife and war, or even for deeds of private violence and revenge. He saluted me as his mother made me known to him, with a look and manner which declared that he at once comprehended me. He immediately addressed himself with vehemence to his mother and sister.

"Our suit has been rejected, and the Greeks have triumphed. 'Tis as I said it would be: a new insult is heaped upon us, and our ears are again to ring with the hisses and laughter of the city. Our warnings, our appeals, our intreaties, for we even intreated, availed nothing to change his stubborn will. He sat on his tribunal white as marble, hard as marble, cold as marble. May God do so to me, and more also—"

"Nay, nay, Philip, my son, curse not," said his mother. "To bear is a virtue and a duty, as well as to act. Be not enslaved to your passions. Another day, and Pilate may be in a better mood; he is not always thus."

"Mother, mother," cried the young man, "if we bear more or longer, we shall deserve to bear forever; if we yield now, were I a Roman, I would no longer deign to use a Jew for my footstool—I would not spit upon him. Nor will we yield. So says Eleazer, and so says Simon."

"Were they with you at your audience?"

"They were; and from a prophet's lips there never came forth more moving words than from those of the holy Simon. Yet upon the pillars of the hall they fell as persuasively as on the ears of Pilate. His icy front never once warmed or relaxed, or not till he uttered his decree; and the base rabble, set on

by Lycias and Philæus, laughed and shouted as we turned away. How, my mother, would you have liked to be there?"

The mother made no reply, but tears fell from her eyes. The face of the daughter burned with the sense of indignity and wounded pride. Philip, chafed by his own hot and hasty temper, rose and withdrew into the garden. I followed him. Had I been easy of defeat, I should instantly have been repelled by the manner which he assumed, as he perceived that I was near him. But as I had my own purposes to answer, I heeded him little. I joined him in his walk, and soon succeeded in convincing him that, in seeking his conversation, I had some end before me of more dignity than the mere gratification of an idle curiosity, or the passing away of a few idle moments. I gave him an account of myself, and of our family, and, in return, solicited such information as he was willing to impart concerning the present condition of the city, and especially of its Jewish inhabitants, in whom I could not but feel a deep interest.

"I know not," he said with bitterness, "what interest a Roman can take in the Jews of Cæsarea." I answered, "that perhaps I was not so much a Roman as at first appearance he might think me; that it was true I had been almost taught from my infancy to despise my own origin, and I had indeed consorted chiefly with Romans, but that, notwithstanding the devotion I had manifested for everything Roman, there was still a feeling within, that clung with a secret fondness to the land and the stock from which I had come, and which had shown itself with a new force since I found myself on the shores of Judea, but especially since I had been beneath his roof, and had heard what I had." He took this very coolly, and seeming to regard what I had said as words of civility, rather than anything more serious, he replied, "that I was too lately in the country to be able to join myself with intelligence to one party or another of the inhabitants; that, if it had been my habit for

so many years to look upon the Jew with the eye of a Roman, to wear the Roman garb, and use the Roman tongue, and receive a Roman's homage, it was little likely my feeling of regard for the Jew in these remote outposts would be a very lasting one, seeing to how much greater danger he is exposed here than in Rome ; nor was it to be much wondered at that it should be so with me." I answered, "that I was sure my interest was, as far as it went, a sincere one ; and if it had become a stronger one just in proportion to my better knowledge of my countrymen, and of their state, it was probable, that as I knew more, this sentiment would go on to increase in strength ; and I was obliged to acknowledge that I was, even to the present moment, extremely ignorant of the true circumstances of the Jewish people. What, I asked, is the present difficulty here in Cæsarea? A particular instance of injury on one side, and of oppression on the other, if you will give me its history, will pour more light and truth into my mind than can come from any other source." He then, with something more of regard in his manner, invited me to follow him to a more remote part of the garden, where the ground, rising to a gentle eminence, and crowned with a small building, which served as a protection from the rays of the sun, gave to those who sat within a prospect of the whole extent of Cæsarea, together with the harbour and the Mediterranean beyond. Here we seated ourselves, and Philip gave me the information for which I had asked.

"The present hostility of one part of our city toward the other," he said, "is nothing new to those who dwell here, nor does it spring from anything new in the circumstances in which you find us. We owe not all, but the worst evils of our condition, to Herod the Great. For when he had determined, among other magnificent projects, to found on this spot a city in honour of Cæsar, instead—as would better have become him—of filling it with the people over whom he was set as king, called hither a colony

of Greeks, making out of them, and those who came from Rome and other parts of Italy, what was in truth a pagan city. Everywhere throughout our land, even in Jerusalem itself, had he used every endeavour and every subtle art to change the institutions of our nation, or secretly undermine them, by the grafting upon them of heathen usages. Theatres, amphitheatres, and games, the combats of gladiators and of wild beasts, were to be witnessed in all our considerable cities, and even within the precincts of Jerusalem itself. The people were not without an affection for the customs he thus brought in, and even as in the days of Moses and the prophets they were prone to idolatry, so now were they prompt to worship the new idols set up before them by the great king. They were weary of the distinctions of both belief and custom, which separated them from the rest of the world, which, especially, built up a wall of partition between them and the refined and polite nations, the Romans and the Greeks. A large proportion of the people, therefore, entered with zeal into all the projects of Herod, which went to make our nation agree, as far as possible, with the other nations of the world. Here, in Cæsarea, he designed even that the people should be wholly Greek, if not in descent, at least in language and manners. Hebrews were not, indeed, by the laws of the place, excluded, but none were encouraged to dwell here but such as were willing to call themselves Herodians. And what more or better was to be looked for from a base peasant of Ascalon? But, as you may believe, when the walls of the city were once up, and the port had been enclosed from the sea, and inhabitants began to pour in from every part of the world, the Jew also—not the Herodian, but the Jew as well—was not blind to the advantages which presented themselves here to his industry, nor slow to seize upon them. Large numbers of such as were zealous for the law accordingly flocked hither from all parts of Judea, and especially from Jerusalem, and here pursued their craft,

and here built their synagogues. But they were looked upon with an evil eye—even as they are in Rome or Alexandria—and quarrels, in no long time, broke out, and served to increase the general hatred in which Greeks held the Jews, and the Jews the Greeks. This spirit of hate we have inherited from our parents; and fresh instances of indignity, on the part of the Greeks, have served to inflame it, and impart a tenfold bitterness. It has never died away; and when there has been an apparent peace, the same amount of angry passion has been running beneath, ready at any moment to break forth. What has within a few days happened to enrage so our people, you may deem a slight and insufficient cause; but so thinks not the true and loyal Jew. He would die rather than renounce his ancient rights. Listen a moment longer. No sooner was Cæsarea filled in part by Jews zealous of the law, than, in agreement with their customs, they erected synagogues for their worship, and in process of years have multiplied themselves in every part of the city. Now it has happened, some of our tribe having been among the earliest inhabitants of Cæsarea, that they came to be possessors of lands and houses, which then, indeed, were at the very outer limits of the city, but now, by reason of its growth, make its very centre; and our chief synagogue—so Providence has willed—stands, as you may have seen, not far from the palace of Herod, upon a rising ground, where it is seen of all who come in or go out, and has long been, for that reason, an occasion of envy to the Greeks. After many fruitless endeavours to deprive us of it, they have devised a new plan, which, because it is made to be a sign of their devotion to Cæsar, Pilate will not oppose, although persuaded that not devotion to Cæsar, but malignity and envy toward the Jews, have moved them. They have declared their purpose to erect a Colossus to Tiberius, and beg of Pilate the very spot where stands the temple of our worship, which, they require, shall be levelled with the ground,

that the image of a man and a monster, yet whom they will by and by call a god, may stand upon its ruins. Sooner may the great sea rise and sweep not Cæsarea only, but Judea, from the face of the earth, than such a deed be done while a Jew lives to ward it off: that were a judgment of God, and we would meet with open arms the rushing flood; this, but the wrath of wicked men, and, as before against the hosts of Moab, so must we now rise up as one man against the hosts of Rome. This, said Philip, is the condition of Cæsarea, and such the posture of our affairs. It offers little to interest a stranger, least of all a Roman."

I told him, in reply, "that it was not a thing to choose with me, whether I should take part with the oppressed; my nature impelled me that way; that, notwithstanding my Roman nurture and Roman prejudices, I had still observed with indignation the place which in Rome had been assigned the Jew, and the manner in which, both by those in power and the common citizen, he had been treated; that nothing there could be done by so few against so many; and I had waited, hoping that time might, in its changes, bring some redress. But I had waited in vain; and I could only cry out against the fortune which had made me a Roman by birth, but a Jew by blood, and so the heir of a hated and degraded name. Finding myself now upon the soil of my proper country, and hearing what I now had from himself, and what had been communicated by others, I could not but confess that my heart had grown warmer toward my native land, and I should watch with interest the affairs which were now in agitation."

Philip replied, "that I should do well to examine for myself into the state of the city, and by inquiry upon both sides, learn the exact truth in respect to the particular dispute of which he had spoken. He hoped I should dwell with them a while, and from that point, as a centre, make my observations. But if, upon a short survey, I found myself a Roman still,

I should do well, within a few days, to take my departure, since, with the same certainty that Pilate adhered to his present resolution, would there be uproar, violence, and bloodshed in Cæsarea."

I said, "that no prospect of such an event, even though I should remain neutral, would drive me from Cæsarea, if for any other reasons whatever it should be my wish to prolong my residence, for I was a lover of anything else better than a state of repose, and should choose to stay and see the conflict carried on to its end. But, if I might judge from my present feelings and convictions, and if nothing adverse occurred, I should be ready to take part with him and his friends in any measures they might think it proper to adopt."

I can see an approving smile light up your countenance, my mother, as you read these words, just such a smile as came over the features, stern and dark as they were, of Philip. He took my hand with passion as I ended, saying, "he hoped God would confirm me in my present purpose, and turn my heart wholly toward the deliverance of Judea. What was about to happen in Cæsarea was truly a small matter, but it might prove the beginning of mighty revolutions. A spark had set whole cities on fire. What shall be done here may stir up those of Jerusalem to deeds of the same sort. They especially bear Pilate no love for insults put upon them many years ago. Now will be the time for vengeance. If I judge not our people amiss, they need but such an example as we shall set them, to show themselves worthy of their fathers."

I assured him as he said this, "that I should now remain in Cæsarea till the present affair was ended, putting off my journey to Beth-Harem; and though I should not consciously interpret falsely the signs that might appear, I should not be sorry if I felt myself bound to remain here rather than go farther. I was a stranger to those in Beth-Harem, as well as to

all else in Judea, and my only tie was that which now bound me so agreeably to Cæsarea."

"Are you, then," asked Philip with eagerness, "on the way to Beth-Harem, and do you know the great Onias, who truly may be called the prince of that region?"

He was both amazed and overjoyed when he learned that Onias was the brother of my own mother ; amazed, as he said, that I should to so late a period have remained a stranger to one so great as he, and my own uncle ; and overjoyed, that through me, possibly, he might be able to draw Onias over to take part in their affairs. "Yet," he added, a shade passing over his countenance, "it will not be much that a Roman, or, at best, but a half Jew, can do for us with Onias. There is only one thing Onias scorns more than a Roman, and that is a Roman Jew." I told him that, perhaps, before I should see Onias, if I saw him at all, I might, by the events here in Cæsarea, be converted to a veritable Hebrew, one whom he would not disdain to take by the hand and admit to his counsels, in which case my services should not be wanting. Philip hoped it might be so, and then, after more conversation of the same sort, he rose, and taking me first to different parts of the extensive garden, brought me at length to the house, where we found the mother and daughter awaiting us, at a table spread with the best viands of the East.

I enjoyed the repast, my mother, I must confess, not less than some of those in Rome at which Drusus has presided, and where I have reclined upon patrician couches. Never, indeed, did I enjoy myself or my companions more. Yet am I the same person who say this? Am I he who but so little while ago shunned a Jew as a Jew shuns a leper? Am I he whose highest ambition hitherto hath been to ape the Roman, talk like him, walk like him, dress like him, smile like him, frown like him, and who now am the inmate of Jews—Jews, not of Rome, who are somewhat, but of Judea, who are the refuse and offscouring

of the earth, the loathing of the Roman, the scorn of the Greek, the hatred of all men; a people fit but to be the drudges and slaves of politer nations? Truly, I doubt if I be Julian, the son of Alexander, who but so late left Rome on his eastern travels, the bosom friend of Quintius Hirpinus and Appius Lucretius, his fellow-travellers, both sons and companions of princes, and have not been by some strange power changed to another nature and another person. Of another nature I certainly am, at least of another mind; or rather, perhaps, I have come, or am coming, to a knowledge of my true mind, which in men oftentimes lies buried, as I think, out of sight, till events, or the will of God, reveal it. Well, most beloved mother, of one thing I am sure, that whatever change of this sort has come upon me, thou art the happier for it. Now thou hast hopes that I shall not forever bring shame upon my descent and my kindred; that I shall now at length, perhaps, set before me the great and excellent of my native land for my examples, in place of those of Rome—some holy David, or Ahab, or Haman, if my memory be right—and try upon such steps to mount up to honour and fame in the eyes of my proper countrymen. May that come to pass, whatever it may be, which shall impart to thee the greatest pleasure!

I have now passed in this ocean capital, this Jewish Rome, two days, and they have not been wholly barren of events or pleasures. But what chiefly they have impressed upon my mind, is the speedy certainty of riot and violence within the city. The mutual hostility of the different portions of the inhabitants, I find to be bitter to an extreme degree. The signs are many, and distinct enough, of approaching tumult. No Jew passes a Greek but he must take an insult, and if it be returned, it then comes to blows, and others join, and the fight rages till they are separated by the Roman horse. The synagogues, often beautiful with marble or sculptured wood, have been defaced by filth, which the licentious rabble have hurled upon

them when protected by the night. So too have the houses of the principal men among them been dealt with in the like manner. Yet of all this the Roman power takes no note, but looks on, apparently pleased with the violences and indignities which are put upon the barbarians, or their only care is, that there shall be no general combats; and to this end the guard of the governor has been doubled, and ere the decree to raze the devoted synagogue shall go into effect, a legion, it is so reported, will be drawn from Jerusalem. Philip, in the meantime, with others of the principal citizens, is working in secret to make ready, in the last resort, such a defence as shall, perhaps, strike Pilate as too formidable to be trifled with. Yet it is their purpose, that no general resistance by arms shall be made till all other means have been tried to soften the obstinacy of the governor.

The Jews, after a consultation among those who are chief among them, have resolved upon another and more numerous deputation to Pilate. Five hundred of their number, headed by the priests and elders of the synagogues, are appointed again to present themselves before the governor, and intercede for the people and their religion. All have agreed in this measure, but it has been chiefly urged by the Herodians, who are unwilling that the present peaceful order of things should be disturbed. They are for quiet and peace, on whatever terms of submission, and for adopting, to the farthest extent possible, without the absolute surrender of their national religion, the customs and usages of both Roman and Greek; it being with them, as it hath been with others whom I could name elsewhere, a point of vanity to strip themselves of everything that by its strangeness should proclaim them Jews, retaining little but the name, and a very slight observance of their Sabbaths, fast-days, and other laws and institutions of the like kind. They advocate forbearance and delay now, for the reason, especially, that the games of Herod are just about to be celebrated, and ought not to be disturbed.

The more zealous Jews have united with them, because, for the most part, they would sincerely deprecate a general quarrel, in which the affair now seems likely enough to terminate ; and hope, by a fair show of temperance and patience, to carry their end against the Greeks. But among these last there is a small number—small compared with the whole—but composed of men who set their religion before all other things, who will suffer nothing to be done which shall so much as seem to cast contempt upon it, if, even by the sacrifice of their lives, the evil can be averted. These are men the most singular I have ever yet met with. Religion is to them, as they say, and as one sees, more than life, yet they are filled at the same time with the darkest, fiercest passions. The very temper and soul of the assassin seem lodged within them, so that to defend some ceremony or law of their worship from slight or insult, they would not pause to involve a whole city in war and bloodshed. Philip, I need hardly say, is one of these ; while his mother and sister, though belonging to the number of the zealous, yet are truly desirous to avoid open violence. He rather desires it, that he may revenge himself and his religion upon such as have oppressed and injured them. If, my mother, thou wouldst know upon what side, and leagued with whom, stands thy unworthy son, who as yet may be termed little more than a proselyte of the gate, he can hardly to-day inform thee ; he is at present rather a looker-on than an actor, and on which side he will by-and-by find himself, he pretends not to say. Of one thing, however, is he certain, that he will stand guardian in any time of danger over the widow of Sameas and her dark-skinned daughter. Anna thinks thus, and she makes pretensions to a great gift of discernment ; “ Julian,” she said to her mother, “ seems little enough of our side, if one judges by the costume, the air, and by words that lie on the surface of discourse. But by the motions of his countenance last night, when he sat listening to the words of Simon, am I sure that his heart must

ever be on the side of the injured ; and by what he did not say, am I sure that, either because of the early instructions of his mother, or because of his very nature, it is only the God and the faith of Moses that will ever give him rest. He wants more than he has. And where shall he find it but here among us?" So said the wise and penetrating Anna. Her mother smiled and nodded, as if assenting. I only said, in reply, something that implied my thought ; "that among the Jews, as among the Romans, there was too much in their religion of what was only ceremonial and barren ; that too many seemed to think it enough to meet the letter of some dead ritual, while the practice of virtue was overlooked." She only looked sad and sorrowful as I said this, which was to me as if she had confessed that it was true enough of great proportions of her people. In her own heart I knew it was sufficiently otherwise, though I could not say so. There is, I am sure, truth and faith enough in her to save a city.

Cæsarea is now filling with the numbers of those from the country round about, who are pouring in to witness the games of Herod ; numbers greater than usual, drawn now not only by a desire to see the sports, but by curiosity and interest concerning the present difference. Philip assures me that the zealous are arriving from great distances.

When some new events have happened, I will write again ; till then, farewell.

In this slight vein, in those days of my more than Egyptian darkness, did I open myself to my mother, who did not, thereupon, deny and disown me, as she might justly enough have done, but had patience with me ; and by her timely counsels strove, and not wholly in vain, to carry up to a full and perfect growth those feelings of love toward my native country which then just began to show themselves. In this manner, also, like a child, did I suffer myself to be afflicted by the general hatred entertained toward our people by the other nations of the world ; a hatred of which I had

more reason to boast, seeing that it had its birth in those religious distinctions which exalted us above every other people. Had I possessed any power of reflection also, or any knowledge of their writings who anciently had discoursed of the Jews, I should have perceived that all of this hatred and contempt, that had not its natural origin in envy of our superior advantages, was to be charged upon the lies which, first engendered in the brain of the execrable Manetho—fruitful of lies as the Nile of reptiles—had then descended an inheritance of falsehood and error through succeeding generations, but which had ever been greedily seized upon, and with unabating malignity constantly transmitted to those who were to come after. Even the Romans—notwithstanding their greatness of character, and notwithstanding so many families of our nation had lived among them with distinction, and had even been entertained as favourites in the very household of the Cæsars—were not ashamed to treat us with the like injustice, and continually reproach us with our origin and our laws. But the wickedness and injustice were not greater on their part, than were both the vanity and the baseness on mine, so manifest in my courting the favour and regard of those who, at the very same time, so openly despised the people from whom I sprung. As you shall soon learn, however, I was presently cured of a folly which, I doubt not now, made me to be scorned by the very persons who seemed most to flatter me; for he can never be held as worthy of a real esteem, who appears to be ashamed of his own kindred.

Again I draw from my letters to my mother, for although my recollection is exact and vivid of those days and events, so that, as I think, I could set them down in order, applying to that source alone, yet in this the beginning of my history, I shall, I doubt not, more perfectly comply with your wishes, my kinsmen of Rome, if I appear before you in the very form in which I painted myself in those remote days. It was

thus then the second time that I addressed myself to the blessed Naomi.

LETTER II.

I SAID, my mother, that I would write again so soon as new events had happened. That necessity presented itself immediately upon my sending to you the letter which I last wrote—if those may be called new events which are to be witnessed, not so much in separate acts or occurrences, as in the ripening of the time toward some general and final issue. Such seems to me to be the condition of Cæsarea. Large numbers of the people, indeed both Jews and Greeks, are little concerned by this quarrel with the governor, being wholly engrossed by the expected games, either preparing to attend them with every circumstance of display, or to receive into their dwellings as visitors, during their continuance, the friends and kinsfolk who make it their five years' custom to assemble at Cæsarea at this great festival. But greater numbers, however, although, together with the rest, they look forward to the games with pleasure, and to the entertainment of both friends and strangers, are much more deeply engaged by the difficulties of which I have already given you some account. The games may occupy their hands, but other interests, hopes, and fears, are busy at their hearts; especially is this the case with the Jewish portion of the population. No one would dream that less than an empire were at hazard, to judge by the demeanour of this people. In truth, they seem to me at all times a solemn tribe; and this feature of their general character is darkened to a gloom like that of night, by the present aspect of their affairs. Their motion through the street is slow and cautious, with eyes cast down, or talking with one another in low and secret tones—turning continually with sudden movement the head to this side and that, as if expecting

instantly the blow of an assassin, or the insult of a Greek. I confess myself amused not a little as I watch them. But if this is so with the Jews generally—or rather with the more zealous portion of them—how much more is it true of so fierce a spirit as Philip. Not the dark Casca nor the lean Cassius ever carried in their eyes what so threatened states with ruin and revolt. Although I cannot but judge his cause in the main a right one, yet can I not work up myself to his pitch of fury ; but, on the contrary, do what in me lies, partly by reason and partly by a lighter rhetoric, to soothe his almost disordered mind. My success has been much such as it would have been, had I essayed to stem the northern tide as it rushes in at the open mouth of the port, making colossal Rome and Asia to tremble on their bases.

On the morning of the day which preceded the opening of the games, and which was to witness the hearing of the Jewish deputation before Pilate, the air being close and oppressive, I sought the cooler walks of the garden, and reaching the little arbour of which I have spoken, took out my tablets and wrote. I had been not long thus engrossed, when I was interrupted by the sudden entrance of Anna, with a countenance more than usually expressive of anxiety. She seated herself near me, saying, as she did so, “ I have come seeking you, and am glad to have found you here ; and yet I hardly know why I have come, and I fear lest I deprive you of time that you need for more important objects.” I assured her that I was performing no duty of more importance than writing to my mother, and that her own name was the last from my pen ; of what I had said concerning her I could not inform her ; it was, however, no evil report, she might well believe. But what, I asked, was it which disturbed her, for her countenance spoke of some new alarm. “ It is nothing new,” she answered, “ nor anything, I fear, in which you will think you can serve us ; and I hardly can say why I apply to you—yet you have inspired us with a strange

confidence, and we think that because you are from Rome, while still you are of our own race, you will judge of our affairs more justly than we can do, who are so near, that everything appears of perhaps an unnatural size and interest. In a word, my mother begs you, and I join her in the intreaty, to use whatever power you may possess to moderate the zeal of Philip, and hold him back from aspiring to be a leader in these affairs. I, alas! can do nothing; for no sooner does he appear with that face of his, and his burning words, than I am straightway kindled with his ardour, and grow as hot as he." I told her, "that what she had now asked of me, I had already of my own mind attempted, but with no good effect whatever. Philip will take no counsellor to his bosom beside his own impatient spirit and Simon, who, good as he is, is mad as Philip himself."

"Mad! Julian? Oh, not quite mad——"

"My dear Anna, you cannot yourself bear the whole truth."

"I will try—now say on—you must forgive me."

"Take, however, Anna, all that I would say, and not a part only. Philip is mad only in his impetuosity and haste; not wholly in the great purposes which he cherishes. I blame him not that he is restive, as a Jew, beneath Roman oppression, such as I now see it with my own eyes to be. I can with him scorn the base spirits who, with new submissions, are waiting to purchase the forbearance of the governor. Were I a born Jew of Cæsarea, I would, with Philip, be a Jew in the full possession and enjoyment of my rights, or I would renounce together my faith and my country. A Jew, with the name only, is one who, with wonderful folly, invites insult from the whole world; while from that which brings this universal contempt upon his head, he derives neither profit nor pleasure. In this, Anna, I speak the words of experience. I would not that Philip should be the fool that I have been. You will be glad to know, in respect to myself, that in the few days I have been

here, I have lived years, and that the demon who has so long possessed me is departing. I am become a Jew in feeling, at least, as well as in name. Henceforward, if I am still to bear reproach, it shall not be for nought. Such at least is the resolve of to-day. You now cannot doubt that I am on Philip's side; that with him I would fight for the fair rights and the honoured name——"

"Ah! how I bless you," cried Anna with glowing cheeks, "for these words. You then think with Philip, that he is right——"

"But you came to me, Anna, did you not, that I might oppose him?" She answered nothing, but only covered her face with her hands.

"I think Philip to be both right and wrong," I then continued, "as you would see yourself, if you would reflect one moment. In his principles and general purpose he is right, so I judge; in his present action he is wrong. He is over hasty. He will but inflame both the governor and the Greeks to visit upon your part of the population some new violence, while he is in no condition to resist them, or take the least advantage of the contest that may ensue. He can display all the courage and spirit of one who is ready to perish for his rights; but I fear—to suffer will be all that he can achieve. Do you not feel that it is so?"

"I do believe it," she answered. "It is my constant thought when alone; but the presence of my brother drives it away. Where he is I can only feel. I am never myself but by halves. Wisdom, I fear, I shall never reach."

"Wisdom, Anna, is not for so young a person as you. I am older by many years, yet I have not so much as come in sight of it. What I have now been saying may sound very wise, but I know not if it be so. I can only say that I think as I do now. I pretend not to know. It is a new thing for me to be appealed to for counsel, who have hitherto been myself a dependent upon others."

As I said these words, steps rapidly approached, and Philip entered the little building where we sat. His countenance expressed a mind disturbed and angry.

"How now, Philip," said Anna; "what new evil have you to report with that ill-boding brow? Surely Pilate refuses not to hear us?"

"No, my sister, it is not that, but worse. Pilate refuses not to hear, but we refuse to be heard. Digest that."

"How, Philip, can that be? Was it not in full assembly of our people that the five hundred were deputed once more to wait upon the governor? Who can have revoked that decree but the people themselves? And they have not done it."

"The decree hath not been revoked, and the five hundred proceed this day to the judgment seat of Pilate, but with their tongues cut out and their hands bound."

"Speak not in riddles, Philip; what is it?"

"It is true, Anna, as I have said; we go with our tongues out, and our hands bound. Neither Simon nor Eleazer is our mouth-piece; but whom think you?—Sylleus!"

"Our tongues are out indeed," exclaimed his sister; "whose bad work has it been?"

"Of all, save a sacred few. And now, may——"

"Nay, Philip, swear not," said Anna, and laid her hand across his mouth. He thrust it rudely from him, and again began his usual oath; but his affection for his sister obtained the mastery, and he suddenly paused, kissed her cheek, and asked her forgiveness. The kiss put to flight all her remaining resolutions of moderation, and changed her for the moment to but the counterpart of himself.

"It might indeed, then," she cried, "as well be that we were heard not at all. A Roman is as good a Jew as that unbelieving Sadducee—our Julian here were a better."

"Who, I pray you," I then asked, "is this Sylleus, that it so inflames you he should fill this office?"

"Have you not heard of him?" said Philip. "But I forget you are but newly come to Cæsarea. Sylleus leads the Herodians; and what with their own numbers, and the faint-hearted among us of the stricter sort, it has been an easy victory to place him at the head of this embassy. I ought not in reason, mayhap, to have looked for other issue than this. Yet I cannot but feel it, for it brings us bound hand and foot, to bide the will of Pilate. Peace, not truth and right, is the watchword with these slaves, with souls less in bigness than a grain of mustard-seed or the point of a needle, who would, like their true ancestor, sell their birth-right for a mess of pottage. Surely now-a-days there can be no shame like that of being a Jew—apostates all—hypocrites and slaves."

So did he run on, full of violence, till he had spent himself, and exhausted his stores of a proud and indignant passion. I could but honour the feelings from which it all came, growing up, as they did, from that deep root of religious reverence which, planted in his youth, had been duly nurtured, till it had spread throughout his whole nature, and drew everything to itself. Still, I was sufficiently conscious that his was a virtue in its excess—in such excess, that it was changed almost to a vice. His religion seemed to me little more or better than a blind and dangerous superstition. I dared to say to him a part of what I thought. I said, "that according to my belief, he would gain more by a more moderate course of action—that the laws of his own faith would be better observed, not to speak of a true policy, by conduct which should exhibit signs of patience and forbearance, and a willingness sometimes to yield a little, for the sake of peace; especially when so to yield was not to surrender anything that could be called a principle or a point of faith; but was only bending for a time before the force of circumstances. I, too, would have him to be a Jew, and that not in

name only, but in every act of his life and purpose of his soul; but I would have him consider, whether by a too violent and passionate demeanour he did not, in truth, do a more treasonable act toward his religion and nation, than by one of more calmness. Pilate, surrounded by his soldiers, was not easily to be turned from his course, nor were the Greeks so few or so weak, as to be deterred from what they had undertaken by any show of opposition, which, so far as I could judge, it was in the power of the Jews to make. It truly seemed to me that for the present, at least, the affairs of his people would prosper more in the hands of Sylleus than in those of Simon."

Philip listened as I spoke, and without those vehement exclamations of wonder or contempt with which he is accustomed to interrupt those who utter opinions contrary to his own. But I could see by the fixed and grave expression of his countenance, no muscle moving, that he heeded, no more than the marble seat on which he sat, the words he had heard.

"The law," said he, "given of God to our fathers is no human instrument, it is no fabric wrought by the hands of men, to be altered at our pleasure, or winked out of sight at our will or convenience. It is the law of the God of Moses, and therefore wholly right, and to be obeyed and honoured by those who receive it, in the spirit and in the letter, by the observance of its rites, by the keeping of its festivals, by the reverence of its Sabbaths, by the payment of its tithes, by the worship of him who founded it, and the hatred of those who would subvert it. The proper Jew is one who not only loves, but hates. The measure of contempt that is by other nations served out to him, he returns heaped up and running over. The Jew's bond of allegiance to the Jew is not a more binding one than that which leagues him in everlasting hatred against the Gentile. Our ancestors, who with the besom of extermination and death swept the land of their inheritance of its accursed tribes, and spared neither the sucking child, nor the

tender maid, nor the hoary head, are an example unto us of our day, how we should deal with any who shall dare to set up their rest on the consecrated soil of this kingdom, not of man, but of God.

And even as he of old was but a traitor, an apostate, and a rebel, who held back his hand from the slaughter of the people whom God had devoted—the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizite—even so is he who doth the same now. The idolatrous Canaanite of our day is the Roman and the Greek. The hand of God will ever be against us till, by the hand of those who love his law, they be driven from the land, where their presence is as blasting and mildew.

I have waited, Roman, for such a day as this, and now it is come, I hail it, and give God thanks. I dare not disobey the voice that sounds in my ear. As for Pilate and his legions, I care for them no more than for the chaff driven of the wind. I and the few who are with me may fall a sacrifice before that altar on which the servants of the Most High have ever freely offered up themselves; but if for the present, it will not always be in vain. Others and other times shall reap the harvest."

"Such consequences may ensue," I replied. The least events, so esteemed once, have proved nothing less than the corner-stone of changes which have amazed the world. But no eye can discern the possibility of aught but suffering and death in a revolt like this, without concert and without preparation. You will only furnish fresh victims to the cruelty of Pilate."

"For myself," answered Philip, "I am ready to be a victim; I should not fall unhonoured nor unavenged."

"But suppose, Philip, your fall should drag down also to the same ruin your mother and sister. There is little mercy, they say, in Pilate's heart." Philip's stern countenance relaxed, and he gazed fondly upon Anna, who, taking his hand, and forgetful of everything but him, said, "Let no fear, my brother, lest a

little flower should perchance be trodden into the dust, lay restraint upon thy spirit. When God and Judea call, go on thy way, let perish what will that shall be under thy feet."

To say anything more I perceived to be worse than useless. We rose from our seats, and in silence wound our way together to the house. At the ninth hour, the deputation was to wait upon the governor. Philip soon left us to join his friends in their consultations; I did not accompany him, as he desired and urged me to do, but answered him I should be present at the hearing before the governor; in the meantime, I should walk forth and observe the temper and behaviour of the people.

I accordingly took my way toward the principal part of the city, which as yet I had scarcely seen. I was surprised, as I proceeded, by its extent, and the signs of wealth and taste, even in the forms of edifices, in the width of the streets, and the solidity of the pavements. The buildings of the city most remarkable for the costliness of their materials, for the observance of the best rules of Roman and Grecian art in their structure, for the grandeur of their parts, and the spaciousness of the grounds about them, are those which were erected by Herod the Great. As I have before said, I believe they were built in too great haste to be built well, and there are everywhere to be discerned signs of weakness and decay; but they everywhere also give abundant evidence in their forms, proportions, and general elegance of design, that the mind that projected them had been well instructed in the best science of the capital of the world. Everything, in a word, is here Roman or Greek; nothing Jewish. Even the synagogues, although they are here, as everywhere, of peculiar form, indicating thereby to whom and what they belong, are yet, both in the structure of the outer walls, of the inner porches, and the central edifice itself, with its columns and roof, altogether conformable to the principles of Roman models. And truly, except the taste in such

things had been borrowed from Rome, it is easy to believe there would have been but little to be witnessed among this people ; for it must be confessed, my mother, that whatever portions of undoubted truth they may be in possession of, they are in other respects somewhat rude and barbarous. They possess, it cannot be denied, that which is most valuable ; yet it were desirable, also, that they had added some of the graces and refinements of life, which give so real a beauty to the Italian and Grecian cities and provinces. A little while since, and I should not have lamented this, though I might have noted it. Now, I sincerely deplore it, as it tends to deprive them of the estimation among the rest of mankind, which is justly their due. A virtuous man loses his power, if his countenance and manner wear not an accordant expression. And so truth, methinks, religious as well as every other that is of worth, should be clothed with beauty. That can hardly be pure truth which shocks and offends by its ugliness : it is adulterate.

But of all the edifices which adorn the city, the palace of Herod, and now the abode of our governor, is the most conspicuous for its vastness and richness. It would not be mean in Rome. As I stood contemplating it, little heeding those in the street who were passing and repassing me, a voice at my side addressed me :—

“I perceive, sir, that you are a stranger, by the manner in which you examine an object which to us who dwell here is old and familiar. This magnificent structure we owe to the generosity and public spirit of the Great Herod ; truly called the Great. He was too great to be hemmed in by the boundaries of Judaism ; and though born a Hebrew, aimed to be as much a Greek, and, by Hercules, a Roman too, as well as a Greek. Pardon my freedom. But having little else to do, I am at your service to give you any information you may desire. I am thankful to him who can procure me occupation. Though dressed in the Roman fashion, yet, sir, I perceive you are a Jew

But that need make no difference; I am a Greek, it is true, as you on your part may see; and you may suppose not unreasonably that I hold a Jew in small esteem, seeing how things go in Cæsarea; but, sir, I consider man first—afterwards only whether he be Jew, Greek, or Roman. What think you?"

I was so rejoiced that the noise he had made at length ceased, that, though inwardly, I fear, I used him hardly, I complimented him on the last sentiment he had uttered, and told him "I thought it worthy of a philosopher, which he seemed to be."

"Truly I flatter myself," he replied, "I am somewhat of a lover of wisdom; but to say sooth, it is not always so easy to distinguish wisdom from folly, even as it is not so easy sometimes to know a philosopher from a fool. I aim at wisdom, but I often doubt whether I do not hit folly, and be not a fool."

I could not help thinking that he had arrived at one wise conclusion, and turned to depart; but he was not to be so easily shaken off: he followed, and continued to pour forth a stream of talk, by turns wise and absurd, but always rapid and noisy. He commented upon every building we passed remarkable for its beauty or its purpose, and named to me every citizen we met. Jew or Greek, informing me as to his condition, affairs, office, or wealth. As we came before the devoted synagogue in our walk, it furnished him with an inexhaustible theme. He said "that not Pilate himself knew better what would happen than he. Nay, not so well; for Pilate knows not at once his own mind; but the Greeks know theirs, and that it will be no impossible thing to force it upon the governor. And before a few days are passed, sir, these walls will lie level with the pavement. This cannot be agreeable to you Jews. It is always an evil to belong to the weaker party; but, then, you know the philosophic virtue of submission to what is inevitable. I trust your people will manifest their wisdom in a timely and politic acquiescence."

I asked my unavoidable companion, how he could feel so sure of Pilate's determination, especially as he was to hear the Jews again to-day, by some of their people who were more inclined to accommodation.

"Human nature, sir, human nature," was his reply ; " who knows not the Greeks ? and who knows not Pilate ? Prophecy is often nothing more than a shrewd judgment. The wise know what shall come to pass from what already is, and has been. I confess I see everything that shall be these few coming days with the same plainness as if it had already happened. There will be sad uproar, believe me."

I said I hoped not.

" Ah yes," he rejoined, " it is a good thing to hope ; but one hopes less as he grows older and wiser. I know a few things, but I hope in nothing. A fair day to you, most worthy Cataphilus," cried my companion suddenly to one who had passed, gaily and richly dressed ; " how is it with your great master to-day ? I trust he is in health ?"

" He is well," replied the other ; " but he is closely shut up with despatches from the emperor. Excuse my haste"—my companion was about to lay hold upon a fold of his robe—" I will say that Zeno inquired for his welfare ;" and forced himself away.

" That man," said my new friend, " is ever in a hurry ; he is, you must be informed, Pilate's chief steward, and knows many things, if one could but get them out. But it is just so with all in this noisy place. I can scarce find a man who will allow me more than a few words, ere he must, per force, be off to keep some appointment. It was not so in Athens. There, one could find a few who would give you an hour or so in the markets, or at the corner of a street, or at the bath. But here, great Jupiter ! I surely deem that a pot of Tyrian dye, or a bale of Egyptian cotton, is held to be of more value than would be a discourse from Plato, and a merchant more honoured than a philosopher. But that Cataphilus, whom we just met, as I was saying, he has a master, and that

master is Pilate; and Pilate has a master, who is Tiberius. Those despatches from Rome, I trow, give him some trouble. He stands, I doubt, on slippery ground: but this in your ear. We Greeks make use of him, but we esteem him not any more than you Jews. Now, my young Hebrew, we approach the market, and a sight it is, I assure you; there, behold! that, too, was the work of Herod. Few things in Athens are finer."

It was a noble structure indeed; and the whole scene was imposing and grand, owing both to the buildings and the crowds of people who thronged the streets and squares. We stood where we had paused, observing and admiring, till, being too much jostled and incommoded by the swift moving currents of passengers, we withdrew a few paces to the steps of a portico, where we could see and converse without interruption. As we thus stood here, and Zeno enlarged with volubility upon the various objects before us, our attention was suddenly arrested by the loud tone of a voice commencing its prayers in the Hebrew tongue. I turned to the quarter whence the sound proceeded, and just within an arch of the portico, hardly separated from the street, there stood a Jew with face uplifted, and hands spread out, uttering at the top of his voice his noon-day prayers; his eyes were so turned up, as to give him the appearance of one in an agony, and his voice seemed to come forth from the passages of his nose rather than from those of the mouth. So distorted was his whole countenance by the sanctimonious expression he had assumed, that I did not at first recognise my companion on board the vessel. But as soon as I had made the discovery, I asked the Greek who the person might be who was so diligent and noisy at his devotions. Zeno was amazed at my ignorance.

"What," said he, "hast thou been but a day in Cæsarea, and hast thou not heard of Ben-Ezra, the holiest Jew in all the city, the very head of the Pharisees, and with the common people of more sway

than either Simon or Eleazer? Daily as the shadow of yonder dial falls upon the sixth hour, may this trumpet-tongue be heard in the market of Cæsarea; a proclamation of holy zeal to the fools who cannot see, though they have eyes—of false and vain pretence to those who know how to use the eyes God has given them. See, his worshippers are gathering to listen! Such prayers never reach the gods. Perhaps it is not meant they should. They are answered in the effect they have upon these asses who are crowding round with their long ears erect." Let us away. This voice puts to flight my philosophy."

So we passed on, and mingled in the thickest of the throng of buyers and sellers—now in greater multitudes than usual, owing to the games. With almost all, the affair of the synagogue was the subject of conjecture or dispute; and from very few did I hear a word of encouragement for the poor Jew. All sorts of opprobrious language was poured forth upon our unhappy people, and prophecies freely uttered of the destruction of the building before a few more days should pass.

"You see how it is, my little Jew," cried Zeno, as we turned away from some of these; "there is no hope for you. The gods have decreed your defeat, and you are defeated. Better trouble thyself no more about it. Accompany me to the amphitheatre to view the preparations that are going on, and leave your bewildered countrymen to Pilate. Be assured he will take care of them."

I made him comprehend at length, after repeated attempts to avert the flow of his Greek, that I was too much interested in the fate of my countrymen and friends to be absent on such an occasion. He took leave of me with reluctance, but not till he had learned where and with whom I dwelt, and had promised to bestow upon me more of his company.

I returned to the house of Sameas. Anna and her mother I found employed in domestic affairs; wherefore I withdrew to my apartment, and gave myself

even a higher pleasure than their society could have imparted, by conversing through my pen with you, my mother. But the time has come when it behoves me to repair to the hall of Pilate, that I may not lose what shall there take place between the Greek and the Jew before the Roman judge.

LETTER III.

THE scene has passed, and I am again returned to my apartment and my tablets to describe to you all that has happened.

The Hall of Judgment, as the Cæsareans term that building where the Roman governor hears and judges those causes which come before him, stands not far from the palace of Herod; and, indeed, although it faces in an opposite direction, and is separated apparently from it, is yet connected with it by covered and secret passages, so that communication can be quickly made from one to the other. Pilate, they say here, being ever fearful lest some revenge, either public or private, should be taken upon him for his violences committed against communities or individuals, contrived these and divers other secret methods of escape from one building to another, and from one part of the city to another. The building is not, however, like the palace, of marble, and of the like elegance in its design and ornaments; it is, on the other hand, constructed of a dark and gloomy stone, and though grand in its form and proportions, cannot boast of what is properly termed beautiful. As I now drew near, I perceived that on all sides it was encompassed by crowds of people waiting for the coming of the Jews, and what was to follow. The whole city seemed to have come together into one place. I was apprehensive lest, owing to the multitude, I should find it impossible to force myself within the building; for it appeared to me certain, that if so many were without, the space within must be more than filled. I

thought it hardly worth my while to proceed, and had paused, that I might, at least, perhaps, by remaining where I was, witness the approach of the Jews, and the manner in which they would be received by so great a concourse of citizens, when I was suddenly saluted by the philosopher Zeno, from whom I had been parted but for a short time. He had evidently, by too fast walking, lost his breath, for he could utter himself only, as it were, piecemeal—a great evil to one whose usual speech is like the running of a wine cask.

“How now, my Jew of Rome,” cried he; “hōw think you your friends are to come up with you at your rate of walking? He who ran for help from Athens to Lacedæmon—Phi——”

“Phidippides.”

“Ah! that is it. Phidippides, Phidippides ran not so fast. It is well you halted as you did, else had you lost my salutation and my company.”

“Your company,” said I, “I fear still I must lose; for owing to the numbers who are pressing into this narrow space, and are already in advance of me, I have resolved to return whence I came, though I shall miss much that I had hoped to witness.”

“Now shalt thou acknowledge, Jew,” cried he, “that there is, for once, use and virtue in a Greek. Follow me, and though thou shalt not get on at the pace of Phidippides, we shall arrive soon enough; so lay hold of my gown, and come on. There is not a blind alley, or a covered way, or a secret entrance in Cæsarea, that’s not known to me, which is one advantage that accrueth as a consequence of having nothing to do.”

So saying he led the way, and threading his passage among the throngs, at length emerged into a by-way wholly clear of the populace. Passing through this, I perceived that we had approached very near to the rear of the principal building; then, by now descending, and again ascending, enveloped now in darkness, then suddenly coming again to the light, meeting and seeing but few, and those ap-

parently officials of the place, who all smiled and nodded to my companion as knowing him well, we came forth at length upon the broad paved area of the chief entrance, when, ascending a magnificent flight of steps crowded with others rapidly moving in the same direction, we soon stood within the walls of the Judgment Hall, more properly so called, being the vast apartment in which Pilate sits to hear whatever causes may be brought before him. With the knowledge of one who is familiar with such places, Zeno, immediately upon gaining the floor, pointed to the spot where we could both hear and see to the greatest advantage, and which none as yet had seized upon; whereupon we without delay secured it.

"These people," said Zeno, "though now apparently so quiet and peaceable, yet require not much to be said or done to throw them into a ferment of passion, and mingle them in bitter fight. The Greeks have bound themselves together by oaths not to forego their end, if it can be gained by any means which are within their reach. They are too many for you Jews, even though you were all of one mind; but as I hear and know, you are divided into parties, which are little less hostile toward each other than any or all of you are toward the Greeks. This will make their victory easy. Pilate, too, is with them."

Zeno was interrupted in his talk, which flows otherwise with a perpetual stream, by the stir occasioned by the approach and entrance of the deputation of the Jews. Their priests came at their head, clothed in the usual garments of the service, followed by Sylleus and those of the Herodians who had been selected to accompany and support him. It was among those who entered last that I observed Philip, Simon, and Eleazer. Immediately upon this, Pilate, from an opposite entrance, made his appearance, and advanced to his chair of state, on either side of which were ranged his friends, the officers of his household, his secretaries, heralds, and soldiers.

The aspect of this man is cold and dark. His

countenance is bloodless, his eyes restless, near together, and set deep beneath his brows, which are straight and black. The features are very fixed, and more as if they were made of stone than of flesh. He neither smiles, nor gives evidence, on the surface, of any other emotion, either agreeable or painful, but maintains one rigid sameness of expression, except that at times a shadow so deep as to seem cast by an external object, but in truth proceeding from some terrible inward commotion, lends to his face the darkness and terrors of night and death. He appears, for the most part, like one withdrawn from what is immediately before him, and brooding in secret upon some deep design. This appearance I may have seen in him, indeed, from first knowing his character, which for a selfish rapacity, and a heartless disregard of the rights and the lives of those who come within his power, has made him to be noted, not only here in the East, but at Rome also. I thought him to be one, as I observed him, into whose hands I should unwillingly fall; who would not, perhaps, indeed, injure or slay so much from feelings of wanton cruelty, as from a cold indifference to the life of another; just as there are those who will not, truly, go out of their way to crush an insect, but will not turn aside the breadth of a hair if one should perchance lie in their path; and those who, if, through some error, they have been the cause of innocent lives being destroyed, will enjoy none the less their next hour's rest, or their next cup of wine. This also appeared to be the truth as to his character, from what at this audience I was able to observe.

No sooner had he taken his seat and looked round upon the suppliants before him, than he said with abruptness—"Why is it that again, with a strange and foolish obstinacy, Jews of Cæsarea, ye seek my judgment seat? Do you think to change my mind by this new embassy? Think you to gain anything by setting the whole city in an uproar? Who speaks for you?"

One of the priests replied, "Sylleus, noble governor; the Herodian Sylleus is set to plead for us."

"Why not the Roman Sylleus? Methinks it became you more to have among you a sect of Romans than of Herodians. Belonging to Rome, it were well that some of you, at least, bore the name."

"The name comes not," replied humbly the same priest, "chiefly from Antipas of Galilee, but as much from his great father."

"Ah, well; that is better. There were little honour in coming of him of Galilee. Where is this Sylleus? Let him say on, and let him be brief. A cause heard twice may be heard quickly. Let Sylleus the Herodian declare himself."

Whereupon Sylleus rose, and stood before Pilate, and after much fawning, and a long exordium of swollen flatteries, he was about to enter upon somewhat more pertinent, when Pilate's impatience broke forth in a stern rebuke.

"Cease, Sylleus, to praise. We are governor here in Cæsarea we know, and the right arm of Cæsar. Tell us not of that with which we are already acquainted, but come at once to the matter in hand."

"Most noble Pilate," then began Sylleus again, "we are fain to seek thy great presence once more, for that we are well convinced, that when before we stood in this place, the people of the Jews, who are ever desirous to demean themselves as good citizens, were not represented by those who could or would make known to you the real sentiments of devotion to Cæsar which fill the bosoms of our nation generally, and more especially of the inhabitants of this great capital. They spake, so we judge, not so much as suitors for a favour, as after the manner of those who stood to enforce what they wished. Verily, their words were more those of the foes than the friends of Rome. They spake too sharply of their rights, and of Rome's duty to her far-off provinces, whom, said they, she is bound to protect, and defend against aggression, specially when aimed at their religion, which

it hath ever been the custom of Rome to respect and secure to her subjects. Whatever truth, noble Pilate, there may be in such things, we name them not, but rather come pleading our friendship and affection for Rome, and asking to be held by her as lovers and children. It was the great Herod who first taught our people to seek their country's prosperity no longer, in separating themselves so far from others in their manners, laws, and worship, but in mingling with the people of every nation, and adopting with freedom whatever was seen to be excellent in their various modes of life, and especially to make these interchanges with those who are the masters and the model of the whole world. It is well known to you with what success he drew almost the whole nation after him, but particularly those who dwelt upon the sea-coast ; so that in the process of not many years, the customs and manners of Rome were to be seen in a great many of our cities, and nowhere more than in Cæsarea ; so that even the games and sports of the circus and the theatres were to be enjoyed in many places, in Cæsarea, Herodium, Gamala, Machærus, without the necessity of a voyage to Rome ; and so that even our religion, for adhering to which with devotion we have been famous through all history, we began to think might relax somewhat of its harshness, and receive somewhat of the milder spirit which marks the faith of Rome. Receive it, then, O Pilate, as a truth not to be gainsaid, that we, who live now, are more pervaded by this leaven, as many do call it, of Herod, than were those who lived but a little while before us ; to that degree, indeed, that, save in some few respects of little moment, the Jew of Cæsarea may, without impeaching greatly one's powers of discernment, be taken for a Roman. His garb is the same, his language the same, his amusements the same, and what separates him is indeed but little worthy of regard. Now, most excellent governor, if the Jews of Cæsarea be such, why should they not be dealt with as friends, subjects, citizens, and children of the universal em-

pire? We see not why a synagogue of the Jews should be razed for this purpose, any more than a temple of Jupiter or Apollo. We will not yield to any in our love and honour of Rome. Condescend, great prince, to consider this our great affection, and to grant our suit. And now——” Pilate interrupted him.

“That is well said, Sylleus. Thou hast done well, and said enough. I doubt not now your love for Rome. But answer me this; are you not still Jews? Call you not yourselves Jews?”

“Assuredly we do,” responded Sylleus.

“Ah, ha,” said Pilate, “then are you not Romans. A Jew is a Jew. A circumcised Jew can be no Roman.” And upon that the Greeks and the rabble laughed. Pilate, as this subsided, continued in a sharp and bitter tone.

“You Jews are surely a short-sighted, besotted people. What cares Rome, think you, for your goodwill? Shall she owe you thanks and favours, that you affect her and honour her? She owes not these to her own citizens and children. What she wants, by the gods, she can command; her arm is long enough and strong enough to reach even to you; and what she would have you, that shall she make you. What more would you say? Speak, for time presses, and the air grows hot.”

Sylleus thus urged, and finding, doubtless, that much of the argument he had prepared could not so much as be uttered in the ears of the governor, much less set forth in order with his usual flourishes, came, at length, after much hesitating, and a long and indirect preface, in which he was more than once interrupted and rebuked by the procurator, to the statement of the proposition which he had been directed to reserve to the last.

“The Jews of Cæsarea,” he began, “as is well known to your greatness, and, indeed, to all the world, are a poor people, and what little wealth they can

heap together is obtained by a labour, and by hardships and industry such, it is believed, as the natives of no other land ever present an example of. And if Cæsarea is poor, so, too, is Jerusalem—Judea, and Galilee, and Perea, it is all the same ; we are a small and poor people. Yet, according to our ability, are we willing to part with our hard-earned gains, if, in exchange, we can obtain privileges and favours which to us are more than wealth." Pilate raised his head and looked at Sylleus. Zeno remarked that, in his judgment, for a Jew, Sylleus was a man of discernment. "Especially," he continued, "does it gratify us, who, as I have before aimed to show, love Rome even as her own children, when we can offer our mite to increase the lustre of her greatness. Nay, it were not reason that we looked to obtain at all times that which we covet, without some sacrifice on our part, or some relinquishment of what we value in due proportion to what we receive."

"You surely judge," said Pilate, "like good citizens and honest men."

"Wherefore, most noble governor," continued Sylleus, "it is through the counsel of our chief priests and the other most esteemed persons of our body, that I now say, that to ransom what is so dearly prized by Jewish hearts, we gladly offer to the treasury of the empire a gold talent of Jerusalem, which, though it may seem but a small sum to those who hold in their hands the wealth of the whole earth, is yet a huge one to those who, as we do, acquire our riches, if we may ever be said to possess riches, by little and little, and never much."

An evident sensation was made throughout the crowd by this proposition of the Jew. It had not been looked for. I asked Zeno if this was the way in which Rome raised taxes. "Little of money so got ever goes to Rome," he replied. "This is for the purse of Pilate. The Jew has touched the right chord, and it sings music in the governor's ear. He

is thinking of bracelets and earrings for his wife, the beautiful Procla. See, he smiles graciously on Sylleus, and seems not to catch the murmurs from the Greeks. If he heeds them not, I warrant him they will soon grow louder than he will like."

Pilate, for the moment while this was said, sat silent and unobservant of all around him, then suddenly broke out—

"Thou hast said the truth, Sylleus. Rome loves her distant subjects as her nearer, and ever accepts with pride the tokens of their regard." He was about to proceed with other things, when he was interrupted by a loud and clear voice, which I at once recognised as Philip's.

"Listen not, O governor, to the words of one who, in every word he utters, seals the dishonour of his country." But Philip was in his turn rudely silenced, at Pilate's instance, by a herald who stood near; for at the same moment he had observed that Lycias, the leader of the Greeks, wished to address him. Many of the Jews now cried out for Philip, others for Sylleus, and the Greeks shouted the names of Lycias and Philæus, each party striving, by noise and uproar, to secure the success of its chief. Pilate at length succeeded in enforcing silence, and then called upon Lycias to say what he would.

"Most noble governor," said the Greek, as soon as his voice could be made to prevail over the slowly subsiding tumult, "it is a long time that the honour which the united Greek population of Cæsarea have proposed to render to the reigning emperor, hath been made a matter of notoriety, both here in our city and in the neighbouring places. Even at Rome, it hath been familiarly spoken of by such as are acquainted with our affairs, and been carried to the ears of Cæsar himself. It hath been also reported to Cæsar, that the imperial Colossus should stand upon the loftiest point of the city, now filled by the Jewish synagogue, so that it might be conspicuous to all entering or de-

parting from the port, and to such as travel the great roads to the capital, as those of Asia and Rome now are; and more than this, that the ground hath already been ceded to the Greeks for this use by the governor. To me and to us is it plain, O Pilate, that the honour arising from this act on the part of the Greeks of Cæsarea will be more esteemed at Rome than will be the miserable pittance proffered by the Jews, which can hardly be thought to be equivalent to more than half the value of the building now deforming the finest quarter of the city. He can scarce be reckoned a friend of Cæsar, and of Cæsar's honour, who, for a Colossus of marble upon the topmost point of Cæsarea, shall substitute a talent of gold, which, while it vanishes in the using, the other endures with nature itself, from one part of which it is carved out. If the omnipotent Tiberius be in want of money, let the Greeks of Cæsarea make a contribution of such pence as they can spare, and by the first ship despatch it to Rome." Here was there much commotion amongst the multitude—the Greeks exulting, and the Jews showing signs of rage and impatience; Pilate's pallid face grew whiter still. Zeno said, "That Greek is bold, is he not? But were he not sure how it stands with Pilate at Rome, he might as well have cut off his own head as said it. Trust Lycias for both courage and cunning."

Lycias was about to begin again, when Pilate, assuming his usual air, and rising, said—

"I will hear no more of the matter. What I have decreed I have decreed. The first judgment shall stand. I was willing to grant an indulgence to you, Jews of Cæsarea, and to hear what further ye might have to allege against the judgment I had rendered; but it has proved but another occasion of tumult and confusion——"

Pilate was here broken in upon by the loud voice of Philip. "The true reasons," said he, "O Pilate, why thy judgment should not stand, have not been

rendered by the false Sylleus ; listen to me, and thou shalt hear them——”

A new uproar was now occasioned. The priests, with signs of rage in their distorted countenances, shouted, “Hear him not, Pilate, he is mad ! The Jews themselves hold him mad.” The Greeks, too, now took sides with them in the endeavour to silence him, but his voice prevailed over all.

“The true reason, O Pilate, why this judgment should not be rendered, is, that it will breed riot, revolt, and war, in Cæsarea, and, it may be, throughout Judea. Deem not that though some of the Jews be traitors to themselves and their God, all are therefore so. For I say unto thee, there are those in Cæsarea, and they are not a few, who will sooner pour out their blood upon the altar of their God, as did those Galileans whom thou doubtless rememberest, or ever they will see dishonour done to the house of their worship. Believe not the foul-mouthed apostate when he tells thee that there is love between us and thee, between Israel and Rome. I tell thee there is hate—deep, deadly, inextinguishable hate, and there is nothing else. The Jew hates the Roman, defies and spits upon him. Herod did not quite, although he did almost, un-Jew us. There be some left who name not his name, but another’s who lived long since, of whom, perchance, the noble Pilate has heard somewhat—Judas of Galilee ! And besides him and much more, Herod Antipas, whom thou lovest not ; we hold from him, and hope, helped by the God of our fathers, that he shall do a work of which the world shall hear. There is a cup in His hand, and the wine is red, and as for the dregs thereof, ye of Rome shall wring them out and drink them.” What more Philip would have said none can tell, for at that moment Pilate’s voice was heard—

“Strike him to the ground ! Hew down the rebel !” at which the soldiers who were near made towards him as they could through the press, but happily in

vain ; for the Jews who were around him closed him in, many of their party joining them, and, in spite of the efforts of the soldiers, whose swords and spears were flashing around and falling mercilessly upon any who were nearest—they love nothing like the blood of a Jew—Philip was thrust into the thickest of the multitude, and so escaped. But the words of Pilate were the signal for a general tumult. The whole mass heaved to and fro in the struggles of all, either to defend themselves, to assail others, or—to escape from the hall ; the confusion and the terror being increased by the stern command of Pilate, heard above all the din, for the legionaries to be drawn from the camp to the square, he himself at the same moment hastily disappearing through the door in the rear of the apartment by which he had entered.

The throng being now too dense to permit the use of weapons, every thought and effort of each was centred in the endeavour to fly from the place, and in the haste and hurry thus occasioned, many, both of the Greeks and Jews, were thrown down and trampled to death in the narrow passages and on the descent of the steps. When the streets were once gained, the apprehension of the Roman soldiery caused the crowds, with precipitation, to fly for shelter to their homes. As for ourselves, Zeno, when he saw to what head the tumult would grow, with a prudence which is a part of his character, drew me away with haste to the near neighbourhood of the entrance by which we had gained the room, so that when the tumult had reached its height, and no more was to be witnessed with safety, we departed the way we came, many who were near us observing our movements, and escaping by the same means. As we rapidly made our way through the narrow and secret passes by which we had approached the Judgment Hall, the air was filled with the noise of the retreating and flying crowds ; and soon, above all, was heard the clang of the trumpets of the Roman horse, as yet at a

distance; they swept along the streets toward the scene of action. So great, however, was the terror on the part of the people of this weapon of imperial rule, that, by the time the horse had reached the hall, they found themselves the sole occupants of the square and the streets, a moment before so thronged with half the inhabitants of Cæsarea.

I soon parted from Zeno, and hastened to what I already begin to call my home. Anna and her mother were waiting with anxiety the event of the audience. I had scarcely ended my narrative of the occurrences of the hour, when Philip appeared. He was now calm, but bore marks, in the fiery glow of his countenance, of the scenes through which he had just passed. Although he conversed with moderation, and with gentleness toward us all, yet was there a wildness and restless wandering of the eye, which showed to me that his soul was deeply agitated, and was still devising further schemes of resistance. Anna, after having heard from both of us full accounts of all that had happened, no longer made any effort to restrain herself or Philip, but surrendered herself to the undivided dominion of her religious patriotic zeal, and by the lofty tone of her indignation, and her sincere devotion to her faith, served to lend a fresh impulse to her brother. Where this will end, or what will next ensue, I cannot pretend to divine, but the causes of discord and quarrel are too many, and now too bitter, to be speedily put to rest.

I cannot wonder, my mother, at the rage into which devout Jews are thrown, or any who retain the least attachment to their country, and reverence for those who have lived before them, or any remembrance of their ancient greatness and renown, nay, who have any proper feeling for themselves, when they behold themselves, the lives of their children, their homes, the prosperity of their cities, and the religion which they have received through so many ages, made the sport of a tyranny like this. Rome at home is com-

passionate and indulgent, at least magnanimous ; but in her distant administration of the extremities of her vast empire, where her own eye cannot penetrate, she is, through her ministers, oftentimes most unjust and oppressive. Pilate, as I learn, and as I see, rules in Judea, not for the good of the province over which he is set, but for his own. His first care is to turn the streams of wealth, of which he can obtain the control, into his own coffers, next into those of Rome : whenever his own wants more, and still more, the cry becomes louder than usual, or it comes over the sea from his great master ; then pretexts in abundance are found, or invented, for extraordinary assessments upon the people, and to that degree, that ruin to the merchant and the husbandman often stalks in the footsteps of the publican. Nay, among the Jews, those who lend themselves to this service—and for the sake of a livelihood, or, possibly, larger gains, allow themselves to be employed as collectors of these imposed burdens—are held in even greater abhorrence than the masters whom they serve. That toward both, all the anger and hate should be felt which now rage in the breast of Philip, and of those who are with him, is natural and necessary, and I blame Philip, therefore, not for his principles, but for his policy. He surrenders himself wholly to his passions, which bear him apparently with more despatch toward the attainment of his object, but deceive him, and end in leading him farther and farther from that at which he aims. He who obeys his passions rather than his reason, is like one who, on the ocean, should hope to reach the port, trusting to the winds alone. They may drive him swiftly, but if there be no rudder and no helmsman, the faster he shall go, the farther it may be from the haven he seeks.

After a stormy day, I now willingly seek repose. To-morrow the games of Herod commence, and it will not be strange if disturbances should again break out. When it shall have passed, I will record its events.

The day has come and gone in peace. I will not, my mother, describe the scenes I have witnessed at the amphitheatre, resembling, as they have, even to the minutest ceremonial, those of the same kind in Rome, of which you have often heard, though you never witnessed them. To thine apostate son was left that office, and faithfully were its duties fulfilled. Never, as I think, was I absent after my tenth year from any game or show within the walls of Rome; or never, except when my old master, Plancus, used to interpose, out of regard, as he averred, to my progress in my studies, and obtain from you or from my father an interdict to be laid upon my movements. With my father, I believe, he rarely succeeded, he being ever ambitious that, by mingling at all times, and in every place, with the Roman youth, especially at their national sports and public games, I should grow up in their likeness, and lose my own. It was to you I owe it, that occasionally I was withheld from such scenes, and kept, instead, to my Greek; but my relish for them I find not to be quite dead within me, even on the humbler scale in which they were to-day exhibited in this provincial city. And truly, I was not the only son of Abraham then and there present, but beside me, as it were, the whole Jewish population of Cæsarea, so successful have been the means resorted to, to tempt our people to adopt the customs and manners of their conquerors and masters. The more strict, indeed, were not there, such as Anna, Philip, Simon, and their friends, but they are few in comparison with the whole. On the third day of the games occurs the Sabbath, when many more will be added to the number of the absent; but so fatal is the power of bad example, great numbers will also be found in the seats of the theatre, amongst whom, alas! thy son may be.

On the evening of the first day, as I was but now about to say, we sat together in the portico, looking both over the garden and the waters of the sea, as they

then sparkled under the light of the half-grown moon. Our talk was of the games, and of what had been witnessed there. I related all that I had either seen or heard. Simon also was of our company, who asked me whether any difference was to be noted in the demeanour of Pilate toward the Greeks and Jews. I told him I had noticed none, or, if any, that his manner was even more gracious toward those of the Jews who were near him than to any others; and what was more, perhaps, that at the side of Procla sat the wife of Sylleus. "There is no good designed," said Simon, "in any quarter when Pilate smiles; least of all to us. Would that his wife reigned here in Judea, instead of him. Her smiles, and they are many, are of the heart. Were her counsels followed, there were no uncertain prospect of days of peace in Judea. She is full of humanity, as he of cruelty. Toward our people she has ever shown herself prompt to do them favours, and atone as she might for the slights and affronts of her husband and other lordly Romans. The Lord be nigh unto her in the hour of her necessity."

"Often has she been known," said Anna, "to interpose between the judgment of Pilate and his victim—believed by her to be unjustly condemned—and snatch him from the death that threatened; and sometimes has she herself, in the silence of night, set open the prison door, and unlocked the chain, and set the prisoner free, trusting to Pilate's love of her—which all Cæsarea knows how fond it is—to overlook the offence. Her heart is full of pity, and even the Jew is not shut out."

"He is not," said Simon: "to day, at the synagogue and in the market, it passed from mouth to mouth that Procla was on our part, and that to the wife of Sylleus she had declared as much; and had said, moreover, that whatever it lay within her power to do, that would she do gladly for the furtherance of our desires. The peace with which this day has

passed, gives hope that justice and milder counsels will prevail."

"It is," said Philip, "the treacherous calm that precedes the tempest, the smoothness of the stream before it shoots the precipice, the stillness that comes before the lightning, the quiet speech of Joab when he smote Abner under the fifth rib. Look not for peace till the yoke of slavery shall have been fastened upon the neck of every man who dares to stand up and call himself a Jew. Procla's intercession may buy the life of a malefactor, or save a thief from the stocks, but at a time like this, her smiles would scarce avail to change the mind of Pilate. His love of money and his dread of Cæsar are stronger both than his love of Procla. 'Tis rumoured that the Greeks more than make good the bribe of Sylleus."

"Still," said Simon, "I will hope the best. If to-morrow shall also go over, and our temple still keep its place, I will believe that the Lord hath turned the heart of our enemy. For it is Pilate's wont not to delay what he purposes."

I could not help saying here, what I did not doubt was the truth, that it was not to be questioned that Pilate would carry into effect his purpose sooner or later; he might not do it to-morrow or the day after, but as there was no power to prevent him, and there was a strong motive for him to do the Greeks this favour, he would neither pause nor hesitate in the work before him. This was, as I learned at the amphitheatre, the opinion of all who were most capable of judging, who knew Pilate well, and were interested in the event neither one way nor another. And I added, that I could not but hope that, whatever iniquity there might be in the measure, it would not be resisted, but that afterward, since it could not be done before, an appeal would be made to Cæsar. However, all I could say was of little weight with any, except, perhaps, with Simon, who judges now more calmly in the matter than at first. As for Philip,

he declared that if all deserted him, as most seemed likely to do, he would fall alone under the axes and engines, ere he would live to witness the impious wrong. Anna was of the same mind.

Ceasing then to converse upon themes which were sure to agitate all who engaged in them, we walked forth into the garden, and spoke of other things, and lingered till a late hour in its avenues and shades. It was not till the sounds in the neighbouring streets had died away, and the confused murmur that came up from the vicinity of the amphitheatre, where idle revellers and the more dissolute youth of the city pass both day and night, had at length grown so faint as scarcely to be heard, that we were warned to our rest.

The second day of the games has come and gone in like manner as the first. But there are, as it seems to me, many indications that another will not pass so quietly. At the circus the affair of the synagogue, in all the intervals of the games, was, as it were, the sole topic of discourse. Some, both of Greeks and Jews, espousing one side, and some another; for many of the Greeks are generous enough to condemn the measures which have been urged upon Pilate; and many of the Jews, on the other hand, are base enough, through subserviency to the Roman power, to defend him, and throw blame upon the churlishness, as they term it, of the zealous, who will listen to no propositions of surrender. Zeno, who, with his troublesome partiality for my conversation, was not long in perceiving in what part of the theatre I had placed myself, soon joined me, "that he might enliven," as he was pleased to say, "by his presence and discourse, the solitude in which I seemed to be pining." I asked him, how in his judgment stood the affair of the Jews; for however this man may render himself both tedious and absurd, by the perseverance of his friendship, and the manner of his talk, it still is universally admitted in Cæsarea, that no other individual

is during any one day in so many different places, sees so many persons, hears so much news, and heaps together so many facts; so that to no other source of information could I apply with so great a certainty of obtaining the knowledge for which I sought. He was very positive in his belief, in reply to my inquiries, that Pilate held to his original purpose, and that nothing now could turn him from it; that the second hearing of the Jews had done them more harm than good; that Philip had enraged him, and that he would now, in spite of appearances, soon take his revenge. I told him, that I thought Lycias had said more to offend than Philip. This he admitted, but replied that it was for Pilate's interest, nay, it was necessary to him, to overlook that; and besides, he attributed the whole disturbance into which Cæsarea had been thrown, to what he calls the superstitious obstinacy of the Jews. "To-morrow is your Sabbath, and to-morrow will the measure be carried into effect," said Zeno; "I doubt this no more than that Pilate sits there before us toying with Procla's bracelets, and now turns his dark brows to watch the last agonies of that dying gladiator. He reckons much upon the Herodians—which some say, but for mysterious reasons which I do not understand, is a false reliance—and the divisions among you; and is persuaded that there will now be but faint opposition, and that on the part only of a few madmen like Philip."

Philip throughout this day has been engaged in secret movements with his party. It is their purpose to post themselves in the immediate neighbourhood of the synagogue, concealed in the dwellings of the Jews which are nearest. Many of these are inhabited by Roman Jews, who would not admit Philip nor any of his adherents. But an equal or a greater number are in the possession of those who are united with him. These buildings are separated from the walls of the synagogue by very broad streets, and almost

surround it, and afford a ready and secure place of concealment, while awaiting the decision of Pilate; and of retreat, if either their own desperate zeal or the Roman sword should spare them for such an act. There can be little question but that to-morrow will behold the destruction of the synagogue. Although no public order has been given, and the people will be tempted to the theatre by unusual spectacles, yet those who know the manner in which Pilate conducts such affairs, are well persuaded of it. Lest, my mother, the events of another day should not allow me to end and seal this letter, and commit it to the vessel which to-morrow sails for the Tiber, I will close it now, commending myself to you with all love, and offering the salutations of the widow and her daughter.

When the morrow is over, I will write of its events.

LETTER IV.

THAT morrow is past. Its sun has gone down in darkness. I keep my promise, my mother, and at once tell you of its scenes and events.

It was, as I have said, the Sabbath. In the household of Sameas the observances were as with those of the stricter sort in Rome, except that Philip was early abroad attending to the affairs committed to him. Anna and her mother repaired to the synagogue. As they were departing, Anna turned to me and said, "Will you not, Julian, go with us?" I said that I could not; my anxieties were too many to allow me to worship, and I did not choose to be present with my body alone. She said that my answer had rebuked her, for she was sure she should think only of Philip. "If," said her mother, "you will not only think of Philip, but lift up your prayers for him, how, my child, could you be more devoutly employed?" "That is true," replied the daughter; "let us go, and pray for Philip and for Judea. Farewell, Julian; go

not to the games." And with these words, the last which I heard from her, she turned away and moved in the direction of the synagogue.

Not long after their departure, I, too, sought the streets, uncertain whether to bend my way toward the amphitheatre or the synagogue, which, whether I should enter it or not as a worshipper, certainly had all my thoughts. I was determined, as men ever are, by the multitude; and then I found all hurrying towards the circus. The city seemed emptying in that direction, so great were the numbers of persons on foot and in chariots, on camels and on horses, many being from the country round about, who were thus hastening in the pursuit of pleasure. I, without will or purpose of my own, was borne along with the current. The expectations, as I conversed first with one and then with another of those who were going the same way, were great as to the entertainment to be afforded.

"It was to be the great day of the games. It was announced," said they, "as I might see for myself, on the corners of all the streets, that a hundred lions were to contend with one another, with other beasts, or with men. That was but a part of the show. There were other things greater yet. Pilate had never before, on his part, made so great provision for the amusement of the people. Old men said it brought to mind the days of Herod."

But long before I reached the plain on the outskirts of the city, where stands the circus, I turned round, and moved in another direction, giving myself up to my meditations, thinking now of you, my mother, then of my journey to Beth-Harem, and, most of all, of Philip and his sister. So I kept on my way I know not how long, till suddenly the sounds of our Sabbath music struck my ear. The streets were now still, and I paused and listened. The chant rose and fell with the gentle breeze that was stirring, and by its uncommon sweetness, drew me on in the direction of

the sound. I had walked but a few paces, when, leaving the narrow street in which I had been moving, I found myself, to my surprise, in front of the devoted synagogue. I stood and leaned upon a broken wall, and again listened with more attention, for the voices of Anna and her mother I knew were mingling in the strain. But I had not stood listening long, ere another sound of a very different kind from an opposite quarter fell on my ear—the distant rumbling of many wheels, the trampling of horses, and the confused murmur which betokens the movement of a multitude. My apprehensions at once interpreted the meaning of the sound. It rapidly approached, and in a moment more a body of artisans, with their implements of labour, and massy engines for the levelling of walls, accompanied by a crowd of the populace and a small guard of Roman soldiers, came into view, and moved on towards the spot where I stood. At the same instant, as it were, the inhabitants of the street up which the army of destroyers were marching, the neighbouring streets, and the square—inhabited almost wholly by Jews—became aware that the long threatened and overhanging evil was now at hand and about to fall, and poured forth to witness or to resist the desolation. As if by the power of magic, a multitude now stood in the spaces where, but a moment before, were but a few idlers like myself.

The worshippers within the synagogue, warned by messengers from without of the sacrilege about to be committed, we now saw descending the lofty steps in slow procession, bearing in their hands the books of the law. They fled not at the prospect of the approaching danger, but gathered around the walls of their ancient temple, as if by their presence alone, with their revered priests and elders at their head, they could avert the storm that had gathered over them, or touch with compassion the hearts of the rude servants of irresistible power, now about to commence the work of destruction. That troop of slaves

with their implements, axes, saws, bars, and battering rams, at the same time drew near, and spread themselves, as if without delay to begin their work, attempting to thrust back with violence the crowds which accumulated around them. But to this first and necessary work were these men unequal, for they had to contend not with the vile rabble that might have been found in the neighbourhood of a theatre or a market, but with women, and children, and aged men, the mothers, wives, and sisters of many of the chief citizens of Cæsarea, together with the priests and ministers of their worship. And they were met, too, not by return of blows or violence of any sort, but with tears and entreaties, and importunate cries of deep distress, imploring them to withhold their hands, nor bury in ruins the venerable temple of their faith. The loud sound of wailing and lamentation, arising thus from the voices of the women, mingled in strange and mournful confusion with the rolling of the heavy wheels, the cries of those who managed the engines, the oaths and vociferations of the workmen, the shrill braying of the trumpets, and the hoarse commands of the Roman centurion, as he essayed to preserve what order he could, hemmed in and oppressed by so great a crowd of human beings.

Pilate had ordered that no assault whatever should be made upon the Jews, unless first assailed by them, and that indulgence should be shown to natural expressions of sorrow and indignation; but that open resistance should be punished without mercy. It happened soon, therefore, that the centurion, not being permitted to resort to any measures of violence, found himself separated from the soldiers, and the soldiers from one another, by the irresistible pressure of the crowds. This was indeed of little consequence at first, because there were no signs of any other resistance being made than that which proceeded from the weeping of the women, and the passionate exclamations of the men. But as soon as the workmen

had succeeded in planting their engines, and raising their ladders, and were preparing to ply their various instruments of destruction, a scene of horror ensued, which, if that centurion could have controlled his soldiers, might in some sort—supposing any humanity to have dwelt in his bosom—by his interposition have been prevented. For when, after having, in the manner I have said, planted their engines in the proper position, and they were then for the first time about to ply them upon the walls, the Jews immediately around could no longer restrain themselves, but threw themselves, the women not less than the men, upon them, and clung madly to the wheels, to the beams, and even to the head itself of the rams, and also rushing in, placed themselves between the instruments and the walls, so that neither could the soldiers work their engines, nor, if they could, was it possible to do so without crushing vast numbers of the people that were upon them, around them, or lying prostrate before them; such reverence and love was there among them for the place and the object of their worship.

But when neither by intreaty, nor by such force as they could use, was it possible to tear these miserable beings from their fatal grasp, and when every warning had been given them that there would no longer be any delay, then by the force of the artisans were the engines drawn back, and when they had been so held a few moments, were let drive against the walls, and all those who had chosen so to devote themselves miserably perished. Shrieks of agony, cries of horror, and imprecations of divine vengeance, then filled the air. Yet it now availed not. The engines were quickly drawn back again, and again driven against the walls, destroying all who still were in their way. But when by the Jews, who still possessed their reason, it was thus seen that no signs of devotion and no proofs of constancy could prevent the fated devastation, they then, as it were with one

accord, determined that their wives and children should no longer be permitted to be either witnesses or sharers in what was further to ensue; and they were borne away, not without force—so full were they of the spirit which is ready to sacrifice itself in the service of its God—to the dwellings which bordered upon the space in which the synagogue stood. Long before this, I had with anxiety searched in the crowds for Anna and her mother, but in vain. But while I, with others, was engaged in this service of placing the women beyond the reach of danger, it was with the greatest joy that I discovered them already secure upon the roof of one of the loftiest dwellings.

Now, while this duty had been performing, the Romans, taking advantage of the temporary dispersion of the crowd, plied vigorously on every side their huge battering rams; and clouds of dust, and the crash of falling stones, gave evidence how rapidly the work was going on. The walls of the outer court and the porches were fast tumbling in ruins. But no sooner were the women disposed of, than the Jews, actuated by one spirit of revenge, forgetting in the heat of the hour the sacredness of the day, and their resolutions of forbearance, and rushing in upon the workmen, by the overwhelming force of numbers drove them from their posts. At this the Roman horse, and at the same time also the Greeks, and all others who were hostile to the Jews, poured in to the defence of the workmen; and thus all around, both within and without the walls of the court, and throughout all the surrounding streets, were the whole multitude mingled in bloody fight. As soon, however, as the centurion had ordered to the attack the soldiers under him, then forth, from out the courts of the neighbouring houses, from the windows and doors, poured, fully armed, Philip, Simon, and their adherents; and though on foot, fell with fury on the Roman and his troop.

The Jews were now concentrated on one side of the square, the Romans and the Greeks on the other;

and with or without weapons, all were engaged. But the Jews, notwithstanding their desperate bravery, and the freedom with which they sold their lives, were no match for the cavalry of the Romans, and were soon seen to yield their ground, and were, indeed, falling back fast, when they were arrested, and made to turn again with momentary success upon their enemy, by the sudden appearance of a small troop of mounted Jews, with one at their head whose commanding air and impetuous charge inspired his countrymen with new courage.

"Come on," cried he, "men of Israel. For the Lord and Judea!" and, followed by his little band, fell with fury upon the Romans. It was at a moment when it was needful that fortune should show some favour to our people, though to me it was clear that they could not but soon be routed, and that with great slaughter; for Philip, upon whom dependence was placed, more than upon any other, was just then nearly borne down by the advancing horse; but refusing steadfastly to retreat before those whom he hated, but feared not, and to whom, if so it must be, he was ready to sell his life, he sought, and engaged, hand to hand, with the centurion. Though so unequal in their advantages, Philip made up in some manner for his position—being on foot—by his stature and the superior strength of his arm. The fight hung long doubtful; but, alas! as it could not but be, the centurion prevailed, and by a well-aimed blow, clove his antagonist to the ground. At this moment the Jew horseman came up, and I looked that he should on the instant revenge the death of Philip; but suddenly drawing in his horse, he cried out, in the Hebrew tongue, "Ha, Gentile, Gentile, beware the fate of Abimelech." Had he to whom this was said understood what these words conveyed, he might, by stooping upon his horse, have evaded the messenger of death; but he knew them not; and they were scarcely uttered, when a stone from a roof struck him lifeless

to the pavement. I raised my eye to the spot whence it came—it was Anna's form I there saw, bending over to behold the work she had done; but at the same instant, even as I gazed upon her with both wonder and sorrow, a javelin from the hand of a Roman pierced her through, and she fell back upon the tiles.

There was then, my mother, no longer any Cæsarea for me; and I flung myself from the place where, till then, I had remained (that I might, in the event of the house being assailed, be at hand for the defence of Anna and her mother), and mingled, as full of the spirit of revenge as any, in the thickest of the fight. But why should I now say more? that soon happened which I had been looking for. The news of the affray had been carried to Pilate—a legion was on the moment despatched to the synagogue, and with its overwhelming force soon decided the contest. But I heeded not its presence; I knew it not. Blind with passion and grief, I fought madly, till, as I suppose, I fell senseless through loss of strength and blood. I awoke in a Roman dungeon. I am in the hands of Pilate. What the event will be I cannot foresee. If I perish, though thou wilt lose an unworthy son, yet is he one who, in whatever else he failed, failed never in his love of thee. I can now say no more.

These lines I am permitted to place in the hands of Zeno the Greek, trusting that he will despatch them speedily to Rome. Farewell.

LETTER V.

BEFORE this reaches you, my mother, you will have heard of my safety; which earlier knowledge you will owe to the friendship of the Greek, who, as he has said—not as I believe—simply because he had no other employment, has not ceased to devote himself to my interests. It is solely, too, by reason of the

friendship which so strangely and suddenly he conceived for me, that I now find myself on the way to Beth-Harem, having liberty for bonds, the vault of the heavens above me for that of Pilate's dungeon, life for death. I can never know, indeed, that Pilate would not in some other manner—though Zeno had not interposed—have obtained a knowledge of the circumstances to which I am beholden for my liberty. Zeno himself declares that it would certainly have been so; for that the governor, seeing how many lives had been already sacrificed, and that he might be called to account for that day's confusion, would have gladly seized upon any pretext to set free his prisoners, which yet it was by no means easy to do, and preserve his own dignity and authority. However this may be, I can feel none the less my debt to the Greek, who has shown in these affairs, that however he may affect to have been moved in what he has done by that restless temper that must be busy somewhere and about somewhat, he nevertheless possesses a heart which is not only no stranger to kind affections, but overflows with a wide and generous humanity.

My reflections when, upon awaking out of the insensibility caused by the blows I had received, I found myself in a Roman prison, all went to convince me that I should there end my days. I had been taken in arms against the reigning power; and though I had not been long in Cæsarea, could probably easily be proved both to be a Jew, and to have been intimate with Philip and Simon, the leaders in the affray. Add to this the circumstance, that my judge was Pilate, and you, too, will acknowledge, my mother, that my days must have seemed to me to be numbered: that, certainly, was my conviction. Yet was it not attended by any self-crimination for the part I had taken, as I doubt not you will suppose it was; or for the cause in which, as it seemed, I had offered myself up. My heart approved what I had

done. I had stood up for the injured, the oppressed, and the weak. I had shown myself to be, what I had at length found myself to be—a Jew—one who was ready not only to entertain an inward persuasion, but to carry it into outward act. Hours were days and months to me in that dark solitude, for the quickness with which truths revealed themselves to me, and struck their roots into my soul, and grew up into strength and maturity. I seemed in my forlorn and hapless state to be myself an emblem of my country, bound hand and foot, awaiting the sentence of death at the word of a tyrannic and irresistible power. My mind reviewed with pain my long alienation from the faith and worship of my fathers. My misfortune seemed to me a just judgment upon such mad apostasy; and I thenceforward devoted myself, should my life be spared, to the welfare of my country, by such acts as should appear to me to be most for her advantage and glory. Thy early instructions, my mother, written upon the soft heart of my youth, had then sunk deep; and now, in my silence and darkness, they revealed themselves, and filled the place where I was with light. The history of our people, and of the care of Jehovah for them, of the good men and prophets who had taught and died for them, all passed before me; and although I felt myself still to be ignorant and unbelieving in much more than I knew and believed, I discovered that I knew and believed greatly more than but a little while before I could have supposed, and enough to make me a Jew in very deed. The prayers, also, which at thy side, or else seated on thy knee, I had in my infancy been taught to say, though for many a year they had not passed my lips, now unbidden returned, and again ascended a sacrifice, for thy sake I will believe, not rejected. I put not my trust, my mother, in the righteousness of the thoughts and resolves which, perchance, the solitary fears of my dungeon, and the human dread of a sudden, and, it might

be, cruel death by the scourge or the cross, and not any love of what is good and right, may have prompted. That were a vain reliance. I dare not say as yet that Rome and her seductions might not, were they soon to try me, easily uproot the virtue that, like a gourd, has grown up in a night. May my new-born strength be spared such assault.

Thus was I, by the strange fortunes that had befallen me, again re-created a Jew ; yet was this, as I well knew, only so much a new hindrance in the way of pardon or escape. Could I with truth have declared myself a Roman, there was not a doubt that Pilate would, on the instant, have overlooked the natural ardour that had leagued me for the moment with the enemies of the state, seeing how I was bound to them by both the ties of friendship and of blood. As little doubt was there, it seemed to me, that when he should discover, as upon examination he would, the manner in which I then stood affected both toward Rome and Judea, there would be small hope of any other event than immediate death. Day after day did I lie in my dungeon, chained to a pillar of stone, awaiting with patience, and almost more than patience, through the new spirit that had taken possession of me, what should befall. No sounds disturbed the current of my thoughts—which I have now declared to you what course they took—save the regular approach of the jailor with the portion of food which was allowed me, and the cries as of those who suffered torture, or who lamented aloud their wretched bondage. The jailor was one who appeared native to the horrors of the place, and to be little different from the stone on which I lay, save that he possessed the power of going from place to place. I quickly learned to refrain from seeking news from one who either replied neither by word nor sign, or cursed me for my tribe, and what he believed my crimes. Once only did he of his own accord open his lips, and that was to declare, as he did with the laugh

of a demon, "that that day, at the third hour, a score of Jew dogs—their heads downwards—would die on as many crosses at the city gates." His care of me, he thought, would soon be at an end. I could not but ask if he knew who they were who were to suffer. His answer was in two words, as he drew the bolt of my door—"Jew dogs." The manner of this man made me feel that there was a lower and more pitiable state than my own. I was happy to be myself rather than such a one. Nay, it seemed to me I would sooner be the spider or the toad that crawled over and around me.

But all this was to have an end. The door of my prison was opened not many days after, not by my jailor, but by Zeno the Greek, crying out with rapid and noisy vociferation, that through the intervention of Procla I had at length obtained my freedom, but on the condition that I should at once take my departure from Cæsarea. I was as much amazed at the sight and sound of this man as if I had never known him; for, in the crowd of thoughts I had been so intently revolving concerning the past and the future, the image of the Greek had not once presented itself. Philip, Anna, and their mother, had often been present to my thoughts, but not Zeno. Instantly, however, I remembered my former conclusions concerning him, and was at the same time conscious, that as he was the only being in Cæsarea, beside the Jews, to whom I was known, and who had it in his power to do me any service, so it must be to him I was indebted for this unlooked-for prospect of life and freedom. I therefore greeted and embraced him as a friend and benefactor. He steadfastly reiterated what at first he had declared, that it was to the powerful intercession of Procla I was beholden for my present happiness, who, having heard an account of the way in which I became a party to the plans and movements of the Jews, and how I had joined at last in the tumult only through a momentary impulse to revenge the death

of my friends, pitied me, and besought Pilate for my release—a mercy which, without much difficulty, she obtained. But when I significantly asked from whom Procla could have derived her knowledge of me, a stranger in Cæsarea—all of my nation who had known me being dead, or at least dead to Procla—he could not, he said, but admit that among others with whom he had conversed of me and the events which had taken place, was the wife of Pilate, who had confessed, after some things he had let drop, that she thought, rightly considered, I was innocent of any crime against either the power of the procurator or the peace of the city, and ought to be set at liberty, and so she would say to Pilate. I did not fail to make him at length understand—notwithstanding the difficulty of ever obtaining an entrance between either his words or sentences, so as to declare an opinion—that I felt how it was to his humanity and undeserved friendship I owed my deliverance. He impatiently listened to what I had to say, more than once breaking in with somewhat to the jailor, who was at the same time busy in knocking off my chains. Both these offices were, however, at length completed, and we sallied forth from the prison into the light of day and the busy crowds of men.

I now had time to ask Zeno after the events which had followed the tumult of that Sabbath day. It was but little he had to say in reply. The Jews were completely routed and dispersed. When they found that to contend longer was useless, they gave way in all directions, and made for the security of their homes. Almost all in this manner escaped from the Roman soldiery; some, however, were seized and cast into prison—a part of whom had already perished by cruel and lingering deaths. Upon inquiring after the mother of Anna and Philip, and what had befallen her, Zeno replied, that no sooner was the work of destruction at the synagogue completed, than the Grecks, in a crowd, joined by many of the Roman soldiery, made for her dwelling, and soon razed it to

the ground, destroying also the walls of the garden, and whatever else there was on which they could lay their rude and violent hands. The widow herself, knowing in season of the intended assault, was concealed in the dwelling of a friend, and as soon as the city became calm again, disguising herself, fled for the dominions of Herod.

I now yielded to the hospitable importunity of Zeno, and accompanied him to his house. This, truly, it was necessary for me to do, whether it liked me or not, for with the dwelling of the wine merchant had been destroyed all that which it contained; so that I could do no otherwise than take shelter beneath some friendly roof, till I should be able to repair my losses. And this, too, must be done with speed; for although Zeno had used all his eloquence to that end, he could obtain for me only till the following morning to make such preparations as should be needful, in order to my departure and journey. Through the ready aid afforded by the Greek, these preparations were soon completed, and before the sun had left his bed on the day succeeding that of my deliverance, I bade farewell to Cæsarea, and through its southern gate took my way into the surrounding country. A single camel was sufficient for such things as I desired to take with me, committed to the charge of his driver, a Jew of Cæsarea, well commended to me by Zeno for his knowledge of the road and his honesty. Zeno would not allow me to depart alone, but must needs, notwithstanding all the dissuasion I dared use, accompany me a part of the way. Soon as the city gates were opened, therefore, we issued forth, plunging at once into the hilly region which stretches to the south of Cæsarea. I had left the particular direction we should take to Zeno, being wholly ignorant, as you may suppose, my mother, of the country I was about to traverse, except that I had a general notion of the quarter where lay the Jordan, the Salt Sea, and Jerusalem.

It was with no little satisfaction that, after a scene of so much violence as had lately passed in Cæsarea, and events that had ended so disastrously to persons for whom, though known but for so short a period, I had conceived a sincere friendship, I found myself once more surrounded by nature alone, which is ever at peace. All sights and sounds at this early hour of the day, and this calm season of the year, were such as gave rise to healing thoughts. I had had enough, and more than enough, for once, of what I have ever loved so well—strife and uproar—and I greeted with a real and hearty welcome the new world into which I was now entering. The air was still, the earliest rays of the sun were just lighting up the highest peaks of Mount Carmel, a few clouds lay sleeping in the east, a peasant now and then, with his loaded mule or camel, passed us on his way to the markets of the Roman capital, while others were just emerging from their dwellings to commence the labour of the day ; these and the like objects were now before and around me, and I confess I felt it to be no unwelcome change after the days spent in Cæsarea. I rode on at first silently, enjoying my new existence, without a thought of my companion, or of the way we were going ; and as a thing truly worthy of admiration, Zeno interrupted not my reveries, nor once uttered a word, till at length, weary of myself and my thoughts, I asked him if the camel-driver were taking us on the most direct route to Beth-Harem, for it seemed to me that we were keeping too much to the sea.

“It is by no means,” replied my companion, entering eagerly the door I had opened, “the most direct way, but it is a safer way than any other, and agrees, by reason of its solitariness, with the wish which but yesterday you declared, to avoid as much as might be the more thickly-peopled districts, seeing that you felt but little in the mood of mingling or conversing with any—a poor temper, truly, for a traveller, for what shall he know more of a new people or country

than before he saw them, who keeps the company only of his own thoughts? He may, indeed, publish the fact, that here he crossed a river, and there a mountain, and there passed through a city or a town, but of what the people are, who are of more account than hills or rocks, he will know no more than his mule. A country is but a larger city; and how, my young Hebrew, should I know the name and the affairs of every man in Cæsarea, as, praised be the gods, I do, if I went about like thee with a shut mouth and a frost-bitten visage. If thou wouldst know what is in man, the tongue is better than instruments of torture to find it out. Used with discretion, and, as need shall be, with cunning, and no corner of the heart shall keep its secrets. There be few in Cæsarea, Greek, Jew, or Roman, but by the use of this gift of nature I am familiar as well with their hearts as their faces. Pilate, the dark Pilate, hath not escaped me."

"How," I asked, interrupting the stream of words; "have you approached the inaccessible Pilate?"

"Pilate," he replied, "hath Procla, and Procla hath Cataphilus, and through these two Syracusan glasses, properly adjusted, do I read his soul. No man, not Pilate even, is wholly himself; others possess a part, more or less; he must let out into one ear or another, else, as a wine-skin, would he burst with the inward ferment; so that by a careful spying, you without difficulty learn the way through one into another, and thus by direction or indirection, do you obtain universal knowledge. The sight of a man, truly considered, is more in his tongue than his eyes; the sight, I say, that sees more than trees, clouds, or hills. But for thee, if thou wouldst travel secretly and unobserved, and without using thy true eyes, this way which we take is the better, and, as I said, it is also safer, and for that reason chiefly is it that I have chosen it out of many. There may be those in Cæsarea who would gladly do thee an ill turn; for be it now known to thee, that in the affray at the syna-

gogue, at that moment when Philip and Anna fell, and thou didst then plunge into the thickest of the fight, many of the Romans, and some of consideration too, Greeks also as well as Romans, bit the dust, and by many has thy life been with oaths devoted. This way is, therefore, best for thee ; it lies among these hills of Megiddo, a part of the Carmel ridge, as thou seest, and is least likely of any to have been chosen as the path to Beth-Harem. Here, then, thou canst linger and muse at thy leisure, and dream or sleep. Yet before I leave thee should I say, that by and by, turning towards the east, and leaving the hill country, thou wilt suddenly find thyself at the gates of Samaria, but being a Jew, thou mayest not choose to pass among Samaritans."

Forgetting my new character, I informed Zeno with some little energy that I was a Roman, and cared not whom I travelled among ; Jew and Samaritan were alike. At this he laughed heartily, amusing himself at great length with the ease with which I was first a Roman, then a Jew, as the occasion or circumstances seemed to require.

Thus we travelled on, Zeno having found me a listener again, and overwhelming me with a flood of words, till the sun was well up, and the chill air of the morning was giving way before the heats of an unclouded Syrian day—when he declared that, with whatever reluctance, he must part from me, and return to the cooler retreats of the city. I commended to him the mother of Philip and Anna, should she ever seek again the precincts of Cæsarea, and besought him, if such a step would give her pleasure, to afford her every aid she might require to enable her to reach Rome, and take up her dwelling with my mother. This he promised to do, and should such an event take place, I am sure, my mother, it will be grateful to thee as well as to myself. The Greek then turning his horse's head, and giving me his best wishes, and the blessing of his gods, was soon lost sight of on his

way to the city. I must confess a sadness at his departure, notwithstanding he so often proved a vexation through the mass and the strangely assorted varieties of matter which, without pause, he would pour into any ear that remained open. But what was a sensible relief under such inflictions, was the circumstance, that he rarely required sign of assent or dissent on the part of the listener; it was enough if there were tokens of so much life as proved him to be awake.

Being now left to myself, I took more note of the country through which my road lay, and of the nearer and more distant objects by which I was surrounded. It was a region very full of beauty of every sort; and I was not sorry, though I truly lamented the loss of the Greek, as one who had befriended me, to be alone in the midst of it. Hills of considerable height, like the lower ridges of the Apennines, which here and there shoot out on either side to the Adriatic and the Tuscan seas, were on my right and left, some bare and rocky, but for the most part clothed with verdure, and showing, perched upon elevations far above the path I travelled, the dwellings of the inhabitants surrounded by their vineyards, for which they win a place where, to a stranger's eye, there seems little else than cliffs of rock. But wherever the ground opened, and the hills drew back a space, the cottages of the peasantry were thickly set together, buried beneath the foliage of the rich fruit-bearing trees of these climes, or encompassed by fields covered with the best products of the season, or by plantations of the olive and the fig. The tall and majestic date tree was here and there to be seen overtopping all others, and giving a sure sign of a neighbouring habitation. But chiefly was the eye pleased with the vineyards, in which, as with us, the vines are led from tree to tree, and shrub to shrub, where these natural supports are at hand, so forming a thousand shady retreats from the noon-day sun.

The vintage was already in progress ; and, descending the craggy steeps, or winding along the road, or standing at the wine presses, were mules and asses heavy-laden, and almost hidden from the sight by the overhanging burden of the red grapes of Judea. Merry and noisy with the wild songs of the country were many of the troops of labourers, as we met them coming and going with their fragrant loads. "Peace be with you," was the good wish - often bestowed upon me with free gifts of the ripe fruit they were bearing along. All that met my sight or hearing was proof of a happy and contented people, for whom the earth yielded with bounty what was needful to their support, and between whom and a prosperity such as few lands could boast, no hindrance seemed to stand but this slavery to Rome ; this dependence not indeed so much on Rome, as on her servants, who, oftener than is known to the powers at home, thrive by the oppression and injury of the subject province. More and more, my mother, the more I know and see of our tribe, do I find myself drawn to them. Not for ever should a people like this dwell thus in subjection to a foreign power. Yet have they now continued for so many years subject in this manner to Rome, and so accustomed are they to the insults and injuries of a state of slavery, that they perceive not the evil of their condition ; just as the limbs long bound by chains come at length to be so hardened, that iron is as any other substance. Many have forgotten that they are slaves. So long have they borne the exactions of the tax-gatherer, that they see in him the messenger of a lawful power. Especially is this so among these hilly and remote regions, where they witness no other tokens of their dependent state besides the stated visitations of the publican ; dwelling otherwise in security and peace, enjoying the religion transmitted to them by their fathers, and the various customs which distinguish them from every other people.

When we had journied on several hours, and the heat had grown to be burdensome both to ourselves and our beasts, we looked around for a cool and pleasant spot where we might shelter ourselves from the fierce rays of the sun, and obtain the rest and refreshment which were now greatly needed. This, after passing over a barren and sandy tract, we soon found; for upon leaving it, and entering again beneath the dark shadows of some trees, which, from their kinds, denoted habitations at hand, we perceived not far before us, beneath a spreading mulberry, one of the humbler dwellings of which we had passed so many. No ray of the sun seemed to penetrate the high roof of the mulberry and some lofty palms that were stretched over it. The signs not of poverty—though the house was small and low—were before us, but of comfort that springs from simple habits of life, and natural wants which the fruitful earth abundantly supplied. At the door, turning the mill to the sound of their voices, and that of a spring which tumbled from a rock at the side of the house, and fell sparkling into a rude basin below, sat two young girls, so separated from all other things by their labour, the noise of the stones, their music and laughter, and the tumbling rivulet, that our approach was not observed till we were quite near them, when suddenly ceasing from their work, while one shrunk backward within the door of the cottage, the other at once arose, and advancing towards me, besought me, in reply to my inquiries for refreshment, to alight and rest myself during the heats of the day, while herself and her sister would draw water for our beasts. I was not slow to accept her hospitable offers, and in a few moments more I was reposing in the cool shade at the door of the cottage, while our animals were turned loose to feed upon the wild shrubs, and quench their thirst at the spring, from which the sisters supplied the water in their large pitchers. As they performed this service, while no others made their appearance

from the dwelling, nor did any others seem to be in its neighbourhood, I asked if they dwelt alone.

"Not alone," said the elder of the sisters, as she poured a fresh pitcher of water into the watering trough; "yet almost alone, for mother we have none, and our father is gone up to the feast, where he strangely abides. Our brothers are in the field on the other side of yonder hill, where they gather the grapes. We shall not see them till the sun has fallen. So it is, sir, every day; we are at home, but the rest are for the most part away at their labour."

I asked at what feast their father was absent, and where.

"Truly," replied the girl with a look of simple surprise, "I thought you had been one of us."

"Perhaps I am," I rejoined; "yet still I know not where your father can be gone."

"If," she replied with hesitation and confusion, "you were a Jew, as assuredly I should judge you were, from your countenance, you could not be ignorant that the great Feast hath just passed—the Feast of the Harvest—at which it behoves every good Israelite to go up to Jerusalem, whither my father is gone, but whence ere this he should have returned."

"The hills," cried out Ziba the camel driver, "between this and the city be full of robbers. It calls for good courage and good arms to go through in safety."

"Our father hath both," replied the daughter, "and we do not fear."

"But what," rejoined the camel driver, "hath thy father, a Samaritan, to do at Jerusalem? I doubted to rest here—but ——"

"Fear not," said the girl, "we are not of Samaria, but Judea; but were it not so, the water of the spring could not harm thee or thy cattle."

"That may be," replied Ziba, "or may not be: when a people are left of God, it is reason that neither their water nor their grain is wholesome."

The girl at this laughed heartily as she said, "Our

grain is grown indeed partly on the soil of Samaria; beware of the cakes I shall now bake, lest they choke thee, or change thee to a Samaritan or a devil. But rest you now, while we make ready some food."

Saying this, the sisters retreated within the cottage, bearing with them the meal they had been grinding; and while I slumbered, through weariness and the heat—it was about the fifth hour—they prepared hot cakes of wheat and barley, milk, cheese, and honey, of which, when restored by sleep, we partook, with many thanks for the great refreshment. When this was over, and Ziba was employing himself in making ready the animals for our further journey, many questions were asked concerning the late troubles in Cæsarea, a rumour of which, both going beyond and falling short of the truth, had reached this lodge in a wilderness. "We hear," said the sisters, "that great numbers of our people were slain. But as we judge from what we know, the Jews were over-hasty, and put themselves needlessly in the way of danger. Alas! we have ever been a people fond of quarrel."

"But," said I, "do you suffer no burdens which are hard to bear, bound on you by this Roman power? And may not the slave turn on the tyrant who treads him under foot? What say your father and brothers when the publican comes with his Roman warrant for the fruit of your labours, which goes not to the treasury at Jerusalem, but to Pilate's coffers, or across the great sea to Rome?"

They replied, "Ah, sir, but then we live in peace in our homes, and enough is left whereon to subsist. Prophets have dwelt in poverty, and why should such as we care to be rich? And besides, if we paid not our taxes to the Romans, we should pay not less to some governor of our own at Jerusalem. Our father says, that our own people, when they have held the power, have been as hard as Rome. Our brothers think not so, indeed; they are ever crying out for freedom, and think that to be delivered from Rome

and Pilate, would be freedom ; while our father tells them it would rather be anything else."

"Thy father," cried Ziba, "if no Samaritan, is worse than a Samaritan, being, as he is, a dog of Herod, the slave of a slave, on whom may all curses light!"

"Thy tongue," cried the girl, "inflamed with sudden passion, is false as Gehazi's ; and take heed lest his leprosy cleave to thee. My father is no slave of Herod, and no traitor in act or thought. Were all Jews such as he, then might we rule ourselves ; but it is, as he says, because of the rotten heart of the people, that it is needful we be in bondage to Rome or some other power. It is for our sins that it is so, and must be so. Besides, sir," turning to me, "we have ever found a friend in Procla, the wife of Pilate, to whom we yearly carry up our country wine and the choicest of our fruits."

"Aha," cried Ziba, "now doth thine own mouth condemn thee."

"I beseech thee," said the girl, addressing me, "rebuke thy slave ; his tongue offends. We are none the less Jews because of the favours of Procla. There are none than we more zealous in every custom of our fathers. But we may be Jews, and still believe that a Roman hath a heart as well as we. If it seem strange that we, though so distant, do know the wife of Pilate, it chanced with her, as with thee, to rest here with her attendants, as for her greater pleasure she took this more secret way—and to those who love the face of the earth, this more pleasant way—to Jerusalem ; Pilate himself passing through Samaria. When we saw her, we learned that the Gentiles were not all such as at the synagogues we were told, but that the God of the Jews is also the God of the Gentiles, and has set his image in them. For, sir, surely never was there in woman a gentler soul than Procla's—nay, not our mother's—and that is much to say, too much, it would seem, I doubt not, to those who knew her only.

Spite of thy slave, we hope and shall say so, that no evil befell the wife of Pilate in the fight at Cæsarea—for the whole city, we have heard, was in arms, and many slain on either side.”

I assured her that no evil had befallen her, and imparted a greater pleasure still, when I said that I myself, though I knew her not, had been beholden to her for my liberty.

As I said this the younger sister exclaimed, “See, another traveller approaches ; he is in good time. The cakes are yet hot upon the hearth.”

At the same moment, emerging from a pathway among the surrounding shades, in a direction as if he had come from the sea, appeared the traveller, apparently oppressed, as we had been, by the heats of the mountain passes or leafless plains. After the wish of peace had been exchanged, the stranger was at once besought by the elder sister to come with his horse to the spring, and himself to alight and partake of the simple fare which still covered the board, an offer not to be refused—indeed which was gladly accepted. My attention was at once fixed upon the new comer, for his whole appearance was remarkable. The signs of wealth were many and great in the horse he rode and his trappings, and in his own dress ; but these, though they caught the eye first, were at once forgotten in the greater power of his countenance and form, which instantly made the beholder conceive of him as one raised above others by birth and condition, or his own natural force. He was in the midway of life, or beyond. His eye, of a deep and penetrating glance, seemed not only to see what it fell upon, but to pass into it and through it, not as if with any injurious intent, but because, simply, it had that power. His colour was as dark as that of the Jews ever is in this hot climate—darker than we often see in Rome, except in those who have just crossed the sea—his beard of a just length, and black. These things I at once noted as he saluted me with the others, and conversed

with the sisters. I would willingly have remained ; but as, when he arrived, I, with Ziba, was just on the point of departure, I could not well do so, and therefore inquiring first the distance and the direction to the tomb of Ahab, on the outskirts of Samaria, I was about to set forth, when the stranger said, that as he was pursuing the same road to the same place, he would accompany and direct me, if that would give me pleasure. I was not slow to accept the proffered service ; and when resting but for a few moments till he had partaken of some fruit and wine, we bade farewell to our entertainers, and betook ourselves to the road.

When I first turned to where the young Jewess had pointed, and beheld my companion as he issued from the dark wood, it had seemed to me, as often happens, as if the same event had once taken place before, or as if a dream had suddenly come to pass. As he approached, and I beheld him nearer, I did not doubt that I had, in some place, and at some time before, seen him. In a single moment more the truth was plain, that I looked once again upon the Jew horseman of Cæsarea, who, more like an apparition—even like the terrible horseman that of old, in the temple, fell upon the royal thief Heliodorus—than a reality, had risen from the earth, and for a time turned the tide of battle. It was with great joy that I found myself persuaded of this truth, for it could not be but that such a one must be of power among the Jews, and fitted to give me all the knowledge and counsel I could need or desire. At first, it did not appear reasonable he should have on his part any knowledge of me ; but when I considered that, from what Zeno had let fall, as well as from the manner in which my weapon and my body had been hacked, I had been long and fiercely engaged in the fight—though in some sort beside myself—it seemed to me not unlikely that he also might have some recollection of me, which was made certain almost by the manner in which his eye now and then fell upon me, as we rode on, and was

again quickly withdrawn. I, therefore, soon as an occasion would allow, turned our discourse upon Cæsarea, asking him whether he had now just left that city. He replied that, "as I had seen, he came not immediately from that direction. He had last come from Antipatris; but since he was in Cæsarea, he had journeyed to the north as far as Sepphoris; but Herod having suddenly left that place, whom he had hoped to find present, he had not remained, but withdrawn at once to the sea-coast."

"You have not been idle," I rejoined, "since the affair in Cæsarea, when this same horse bore you against the centurion and his troop at the moment the brave Philip was cut down."

"I, too, am right, then," replied the stranger, "in supposing thee to be the young madman who broke loose at the same moment, but driving headlong and blindly into a mass of the Greeks, was quickly overpowered and pinioned. I marvel to see you among the living, having once been within reach of Pilate."

I then gave him an account of the manner in which I had been so fortunate as to escape from his power; and in my turn asked him by what chance he had happened to come up at the unexpected conjuncture he did, and by what means, when the odds were so great against him, he had been able to effect his retreat.

"As soon," he replied, "as I heard of the intended outrage upon our people in Cæsarea, I resolved to be there, to stand by them as I might. I could not, however, reach the place till the morning of the Sabbath when the assault took place; when, having no means of learning what was to be done on the part of the Jews—the fight, indeed, was already begun—I could only rush upon the scene in the manner I did, and with such followers as, with but brief notice, I could persuade to join me. I fought till the coming of a fresh legion of the Roman power made longer resistance to be certain destruction or captivity,

without any attending advantage, when, with the rest of our unhappy countrymen, I fled; and while they took shelter in the by-ways of the city and their dwellings, I, borne by my good Arab, passed the gates, and soon gained the neighbouring hills."

"But why," I asked, "as you made toward the centurion, gave you that warning—to save a life you yourself were about to take?"

"For the reason," he replied, "that even as I would not that child of mine should do the deed of Judith or Deborah, so did it grieve me that Anna, a child of Sameas, should, whom I had known and loved as a daughter. Neither was I willing that a brave Roman should die the death of a dog. Yet how knew I but it was the Lord's doing? And who was I to hinder or defend? Wherefore gave I forth that uncertain voice, which, if the Lord so pleased, the man should comprehend, and so be saved for a more worthy death with me hand to hand, a fate I should have soon dealt out to him. It pleased the Lord that he should die as a fool dies—by the hand of a woman."

"And it was to revenge her death," I said, "that I threw myself into the fight, which otherwise I should have shunned; for I deemed it needlessly provoked." As I said these last words, the eye of my companion fell upon me with a meaning quite different from its former expression, and which showed that dark passions were lodged within.

"How sayest thou?" he bitterly asked; "needlessly provoked? Is the life of a Jew nought, and his faith nought? Shall he, at the word of a Roman, give up both? Is he forever to be the sport of the tyrant? Are his only words to be, here is my neck for thy foot, and my throat for thy knife? Verily I thought thou wast a Jew also. Why, then, didst thou fight to revenge the death of a Jewess? What was she to thee?"

"She was much to me," I said, "as was her mother; even as for two weeks and more I had dwelt

beneath their roof, and in that short time had I come to love her as a sister. And it was to revenge her death, and not because I could justify the revolt of the Jews, that I joined the fight. Yet do I not, in saying this, admit that I am no Jew. I am now a Jew, if I was not in Rome whence I am but lately come, and it was because I had become a Jew, that I withstood Philip and his adherents to the last as more mad than wise. They were as men driven by their passions, and seeking their own revenge rather than their country's good."

At this the Jew horseman looked at me, as if he hardly understood me, notwithstanding his far-reaching and all-embracing eyes. A calm again came over him, and in the tones of his former conversation he said, "I perceive, young man, there is virtue in thee. Abjure thy Rome a little longer, and dwell among thine own people, and thou wilt grow to be worthy of thy great descent. But the Roman Jew, as I take thee to be, is no Jew."

I said that it was my purpose to see the whole of the land, in its length and breadth, from Dan to Beersheba, and from Arabia to the shores of the sea, ere I again returned to Rome; and but for the interruption of my plans occasioned by the tumults of Cæsarea, I should long since have been at Beth-Harem, whither I was now bound, and whence, after abiding there a space, I should set forth on my Jewish travels.

"Whom seek you at Beth-Harem?" asked the stranger; "for I myself dwell there, and will guide you on the way."

I said I sought the dwelling of Onias, a prince, as I was told, of that country.

"None so well as I," he quickly replied, "can take you to his dwelling, for I am Onias of Beth-Harem."

At this unlooked-for announcement I was amazed, as you may well suppose, my mother, and could only

say in return, "that I then was his nephew, Julian of Rome, the son of Naomi."

Not less astonished than I was thy brother in his turn. He welcomed me heartily to the land of our fathers, and would not doubt that, when I had dwelt for a time beneath his roof, I should take too deep root in the soil ever to flourish again in that of Italy. He asked with great affection after your welfare, and wished that you, too, had undertaken your travels to the East. For a long time we conversed of the condition and welfare of our family, dispersed as it is so widely in Italy, Greece, Egypt, and Syria. He ended with saying, that he trusted ere long that events of such a kind would take place in Judea, as to call back all wanderers and residents in foreign lands to their native soil: new scenes were about to unfold.

Since leaving the cottage among the hills, where we had been so hospitably entertained, we had journeyed on through a richer and more highly-cultivated soil. Although the region was still hilly, and rocks were to be seen jutting out on the sides of the hills, yet was there no spot to be discerned from their base to their summits, which did not bear testimony to the labours of the husbandman, and was not burdened with the products of the latter harvest. Villages on all sides, wherever the eye could reach far around, were seen half buried amongst the dense foliage of these regions, and the highways everywhere filled with the heavy wains, drawn by oxen or bulls, and laden with fruits and grain. Never had I beheld a region that gave better proof of industry and skill on the part of the inhabitants, or where the population appeared to enjoy more of the common comforts of life. We were still winding along among valleys of the utmost beauty and fertility, when, as the hills on the north began to open, Onias said that we were now within the territory of Samaria, which, for his own part, he would gladly have avoided; but seeing, as he judged, that I should feel desirous to pass by a place

so famous as the city of that name, he had departed from the course which he was accustomed to pursue when he crossed over from the sea to Beth-Harem. "Soon," said he, "as we reach yonder hillock on the summit of which you can already see the ruins of the tomb of Ahab, will you obtain a view of the city."

In a few moments we stood on the place to which he had pointed. The ruins of what had been a structure of some magnificence covered the spot, over which towered palms and cypresses. Before us and below us lay the city, built upon an elevation of an oval form in the midst of an extensive plain, bounded on all sides by a circle of hills. We ourselves were upon a part of the southern range which thus hemmed it in. At a distance were visible, towards the sea, the tops of Carmel, and towards Galilee Mount Tabor, towards the Jordan Hermon and Gilboa, and behind us Gerizim and Ebal; while in the north, like the light clouds that were above us, we could just discern the snowy peaks of Lebanon. The city glittering beneath the rays of the sun, then not far above the horizon, gave unexpected tokens, in both the extent of the walls and the overtopping structures within, of its extent and the wealth of its inhabitants. I expressed to Onias my delight and surprise.

"What you see," he replied, "is the work of Herod; not, as you may believe, of those half-idolaters. Herod, wanting a stronghold here in the heart of the land, rebuilt Samaria, which, since the destruction of it by Hyrcanus, had lain in ruins. Now, by reason of the immense sums which Herod expended in the building of the walls, and in erecting temples and theatres within, and especially because of the multitudes of new inhabitants—Greeks, Jews, and Romans—whom he compelled to remove thither, it is grown to be a place of some consequence, but not of so much as its foolish inhabitants are fain to believe. They are a bastard race. Upon a Gentile stock have been grafted decayed and rotten branches from all parts of

the earth, so that there is as little of the blood of the Jew in a Samaritan, as there is of the true faith of a Jew in his doctrine. Come on, let us give them our backs. May their prosperity decrease daily!"

I would willingly have lingered longer on a spot so agreeable in itself, and which spread out before the beholder so wide and beautiful a prospect. Inwardly resolving at some future time to return and examine at my leisure a country that seemed to offer so much to reward the observer, I followed Onias, and Samaria was soon hidden again behind hills and woods.

"Sebaste," said Onias abruptly, as we resumed our journey; "Sebaste is the name which Samaria now bears, given to it by that flatterer Herod; a Roman name to a Jewish town—as ill sorted as a born Jew with a Roman name. What ill chance gave thee the name of Julian?"

My father, I answered, would have it so, who, he might know, was no lover of his own race.

"I might have guessed as much," replied Onias; "Rome weaned him from Judea. And when Rome spoiled him of his Jewish nature, it wrought a greater ruin than sometimes when it spoils a kingdom. Thy father was born for greater things than he ever performed. His days were passed in amassing wealth; they should have been spent at the head of armies."

"So," said I, "is it ever the nature of the more powerful to draw everything over to itself. The greatness, splendour, and renown of Rome, dazzle the young mind, and easily take it captive. It was but a little while since, that to be known to be a Jew was to me the greatest affliction of life. In truth, the shame of my descent has been to me the only evil I have suffered from my birth. Wealth could satisfy every wish of my heart, but it could not cause me to be born again; it could not change the hue of my skin nor the features of the face."

"Happy for thee, Julian, that a power higher than

thyself ruled over thee and saved thee. Judea needs thee; and I trust to see thee answer to her call."

I said that I was now bent upon knowing the exact state of the country, that I might learn what part it became me to act. I could not in Cæsarea take sides with Philip, because, as I judged, he was over hasty, and outwent the judgment of the people at large, whereby he injured rather than benefited a good cause.

"Nevertheless," rejoined my uncle, "it was a sign of the times, and showed what is in the heart of the Jews. What happened in Cæsarea would have happened also in Jericho, in Sychar, in Bethsaida, nay, even in Samaria; for so much may be said for Samaritans, that they love not Rome, but look, even as we do, for a deliverance from her dominion, and for a deliverer. Julian, the time ripens! The wise and the good of our land with impatience await what shall ere long be made manifest."

Onias said this in deep and significant tones. I hoped that he would go on, but he paused.

I then said, "that even in Rome I had heard somewhat of that concerning which he spoke; but it was little and uncertain, and I knew not what to think. From my mother I had heard of a day of deliverance to which our tribe looked forward, and of the coming of Messiah; but of what was truth and what was error in such expectations, I knew nothing. Philip, too, had spoken of the same things. But to me it all seemed doubtful and baseless, without anything certain and fixed to which the mind could attach itself; while that Judea was an oppressed and degraded kingdom, that her rights were withheld, her sceptre unrighteously wrested from her grasp, her liberties gone, were things that every eye could see, and the remedy for such evils not difficult to be devised, nor out of all hope to be carried into execution."

Onias at this looked upon me with an expression not easy to interpret; but words soon followed.

"Young man," said he, "your speech is both pious

and impious. The piety, I believe, is your own; the impiety is your father's. Had God forsaken you as your father did, you had now been altogether as one of the Gentiles. But He has watched over and redeemed you for ends greater than you now know of. When once beneath the roofs of Beth-Harem, I shall trust to weed out the errors that now offend thy mind, and plant in their place the seeds of truth. There be others there also, men learned in our laws, at whose feet a willing disciple shall drink in wisdom as water."

Onias, as he said these words, fell back into himself, as I perceive he is ever prone to do, and we continued our way in silence.

The shadows of evening were now around us, and we were travelling still among the hills that stretch to the east and south of Samaria, but not in solitudes, for the country was everywhere thickly peopled, and the ways were yet filled with travellers to and from Samaria, and with the peasants of the neighbouring places, returning home with empty or loaded wagons. I was looking to keep on our journey during the early part of the night, and reach the Jordan at least before we slept, but my uncle now informed me that a little distance beyond where we were, we should arrive at the inn of Jael, nigh unto Thebez, where we should rest, for our beasts' sake, until the following day.

While he was speaking we emerged from the hills and woods, and descended the last slope which conducted us to the plains. As we thus descended, Mount Hermon was before us, over which the moon was just climbing, and beneath us lay the valley of the Jordan, stretching to the horizon, covered with its villages, the nearer of which were clearly visible, with groves of the palm intermingled, sending their lofty tops to the heavens. I was too much engrossed by the beauty of the scene to think of my companion, and we rode on, each pursuing his own thoughts, till we approached the inn of Jael. This we found thronged already by

those who had come to seek shelter for the night; for at this season of the year, although a fierce heat is apt to rage through the day, the air becomes cold at night, and heavy dews descend, so that the covering of a roof or a tent is necessary. We at first believed there could be no room for us, the concourse of strangers was so great, the court-yards being crowded with their beasts and their lading, and the apartments and the roofs with their owners and attending slaves. But no sooner did Jael discover who was his guest, than the room which had been refused us by some to whom we had first applied, was quickly furnished. We were conducted to the roof, where, a tent being spread over us, we partook of our evening meal, and prepared to rest for the night.

When we had supped, and I then sat looking off upon the surrounding country, and conversing, Jael, our host, joined us with low obeisances and formal speech. He hoped that the great Onias had returned in peace; all the country had lamented his absence. It was many days, and seemed months, since he had bestowed upon his poor dwelling the honour of his presence. "I learn," said he, "that thou hast been beyond Sepphoris even to Sidon."

"Farther than that, Jael," replied Onias, "even as far as Antioch and Edessa. What hast thou heard from Beth-Harem of late? are all well?"

"All are well," replied Jael; "to-day a traveller from the East, and who had passed through the midst of Beth-Harem, reported, as from those who had knowledge, that all were well in the house of Onias. Thou wast not, then, at the outbreak at Cæsarea, where the madcap Philip, son of Sameas, threw all the city into a blaze?"

My uncle frowned as he said, "Jael, thy soul is too much in thy purse. The Lord reward thee not according to thy zeal for him, for thy lot were then truly but as that of the wicked."

"Should I," said Jael quickly, "plough up a wheat

field, thick with full and milky ears, only to try a better seed? Should I shave this beard in hope that a comelier one might sprout? Should I take out a bill against my wife that I might win, perchance, a better? My beard is well enough, my wife is well enough, my wheat is well enough. Ah, what shall come of change and commotion but losses! Who suffer now? None but rogues and mischief-makers. Who——”

“I will not reason with thee,” said my uncle with impatience. “It is well for Judea that some souls are made of other stuff.”

“In my belief,” continued Jael, “the Jews of Cæsarea were dealt with after their deserts. A man now-a-days can live scarcely a day in peace for these sons of Belial. But the blood let in Cæsarea may keep it cool in Jerusalem, so shall good come of it. Hast thou heard the news here on the Jordan, Onias? If we now bestir ourselves, we may do greater things than they in Cæsarea.”

“What mean you?” said my uncle.

“I speak,” said Jael, “of John of Hebron, who hath taken pains to travel beyond the Jordan, and up and down in that region, some say stirring up the people, but others only preaching. But who can stir the people more than he who preaches? The ears of the council or of Herod I trust will be open to take note of him.”

“But what mean you?” said Onias; “and of whom do you speak? Jest not after thy fashion.”

“I speak truly but what I hear,” replied Jael, “and jest not. I have not seen this wanderer myself, but have heard somewhat from every one who hath come from beyond Jordan. Some even hold him a prophet, but it were nearer the truth, I doubt not, to hold him possessed of a devil. Prophets do not grow on every bush.”

“How is he followed?” asked my uncle.

“From far and near,” answered Jael, “have people resorted to him, some even from Jerusalem. But that

makes for nothing, seeing that they of Jerusalem are ever running after some new thing."

"What," continued Onias, "is the manner of his life and appearance?"

Jael could not say : he had heard a thousand varying accounts from travellers, but knew not which were true nor which were false. His belief was, that he was one in part beside himself, and who was therefore just the kind of adventurer to amaze and seduce the people. With the help of a few magic arts, he would soon make himself great.

The vociferations of new comers, now calling loudly upon Jael, put an end to our discourse ; our host descended with reluctance to perform some of the duties of his office, and soon after, closing the folds of our tent, we fell asleep.

LETTER VI.

FATIGUED by reason of our journey of the preceding day, the sun was far advanced into the heavens before the noise of the inn-yard woke us from our slumbers, and we were ready for the pleasing labour yet before us. Crowds of travellers, in not more haste than ourselves, surrounded the gateways with their camels, asses, and other beasts of burden ; some quarrelling with Jael on account both of their entertainment and the sum he had demanded of them, some with each other about some idle distinction of nation or tribe, while a large number pursued in quiet their own affairs, or looked on and laughed at those who, because life did not present enough of necessary evils, were seeking to multiply them. Jael moved among them a sort of monarch, from the power he possessed, not over others, but over himself—therefore, indeed, over others also. He was not to be ruffled by any of the reproaches which, whether justly or not, were showered upon him. Those who had abused him

most he did not fail to dismiss from his dominions with some wish of peace, while from them he received, perhaps, only curses in return.

“Jael,” said Onias, as we stood beneath the shadow of a plane-tree watching the scene, while Ziba was making the last preparations; “Jael is a man who lives for himself alone. Though you behold him so pliant, and so prompt to please and serve, and so patient under what seem undeserved reproaches, he is yet as void of faith both towards man and God as this pomegranate shell is of meat. His aim is but one—his purse; and to fill this in the best manner, he justly thinks, is to attract by his attentiveness and submissiveness to all, people of all names and nations, Jew, Samaritan, Arab, or Roman—it is the same to Jael, and Jael is the same to them. He is just to one as soon as to another, and will defraud one as soon as another. In what proportion he is knave, and in what honest, no one knows. When I am on this road, and weary with the way, my feeling is, and doubtless it is so with all, here now shall I be certain of such observances as hardly my best friend could lavish upon me; and I approach the roof of Jael as if it were another Beth-Harem. Behold there, how to that churlish Greek he returns smiles and parting salutations for railing.” He then approached us as if for some further discourse, but we at the same moment mounting our beasts, and bidding him farewell, he only wished us well on our way, and we sallied forth from the yard.

“The sun shines not more constantly,” said Onias, as we plunged into some deep thick shadows, beneath which the road here wound along, “than the face of Jael; but while the sun shines for others, Jael shines only for himself. His smiles were frowns, unless each drew fish of some sort to his net, birds of some sort to his snare. He perceives no difference between Roman, Greek, Jew, and Samaritan, but as they contribute more or less to his wealth, which grows

and swells like Jordan in the early rains. Though the land now lies cursed and barren, and the enemies of the people of God rise up around her, and dwell within her very borders, carrying her not away into captivity, but binding her a captive on her own soil, not a finger would this man move for her deliverance; nay, rather, I doubt not, would he league himself with the adversary, than that the base traffic should suffer damage which fills his hands with gold. And many such there be here, and over the face of the whole land, so that were Messiah himself to come, I surely think they would deny him, except he came in Cæsar's name. Saw you not last night his manifest vexation at the reports brought from the Jordan?"

"It was evident enough," I replied, "that he liked them not. They foreboded in his ear a new uproar as in Cæsarea. But in these rural districts there could be little danger."

"I know not that," answered Onias; "the people lie thickly sown among these deep shades; we see them not, but they are for multitude like the ripe seed of the mustard shaken by the winds from the tree. A great cause would call them up in hosts not easily numbered; and a slight cause rouses them: for if many be of Jael's nature, more are not. The ears of the people are wide open to any sound of liberty. The rulers, as is ever with those who enjoy power, are indeed of another mind. Change could do little for them in the best event, and might shake them from their seats: but the people do yearn, even as the hungry for food, for the approach of some power that shall raise them to their ancient place. They await its coming with impatience."

"They will, then," I said, "flock around this prophet on the Jordan, if he be one in truth; yet we perceive no signs of it."

"There are not a few," rejoined my uncle, "who, moved by what they deem a divine impulse, go forth to teach and declare in the streets and highways, in

wild and desert places, what they might as well deliver within the walls of the synagogue. These now cease to stir the people. He of whom Jael spoke seems to be of this order. There will be other signs—another approach—when He shall come. Time will unfold what it shall.”

Onias here withdrew into himself, buried in thought, of which he seemed to desire no participator: so we then rode along in silence together on our way; but soon wearying of this, I left my uncle to his reflections, and turned back to where Ziba was slowly toiling along with his heavy-laden camel, that I might hold discourse with him. As I reached him, he was singing at the top of his voice a song in praise of the wines of Judea; but soon as I joined him he broke off, saying, “that by the song he was singing he was trying to lose the taste of the vile drink that had been served to him by the rogue Jael, which was more sour than the visage of Ben-Ezra of Cæsarea. Truly, those maids in the woods knew how to deal with a stranger, camel-driver though he was. They were no Samaritans after all, that was certain. Their wine was sweet as a dried grape, and it was poured out like water. Jael’s, indeed, was in abundance enough, but what signifies an abundance of that which cannot be swallowed. Yet would he stand by and commend it as fit for kings, and sweeter than wines of Greece or Italy, with such oaths and smiles, too, that one was ready to give the lie to his own burning throat. Well, well, wait a while, and the poorest of us will have better wine than the best of Jael’s.”

“How so? shall you all turn vine-dressers? or what is to happen?”

“What is to happen? A Jew! and you know not that? You may hear it every day with your ears open. Things are not to remain as they are. Some new kingdom is to be set up, some say under Herod of Galilee; so the Herodians, most of them, think.

As others judge, he who is to reign is yet, and shortly too, to make his appearance, but how or whence, no one knows, or can know. But why do I tell you this, when you are yourself, I doubt not, a scribe at least. Yet, methinks, I heard you are from Rome."

"I am from Rome," I answered, "but still I am a Jew."

"What sort of Jews," he asked, "are they in Rome? I do not know that I should think thee a Jew. Do they keep the law in Rome?"

"Surely, or we were not Jews."

"I see not that," answered Ziba. "We keep not the law here in Judea, yet we are Jews."

"There are two ways," said I, "of keeping the law; one is, to keep the letter of the law only, as the Pharisees; the other, to observe the letter, but keep it in its spirit too."

"We only do the first hereabouts," replied the camel-driver. "There's that Jael, he is an elder of the synagogue hard by his inn. You would think, to see him there, as I have when on this road, that never a prophet loved God like him; yet the next day shall you pay him a full sum for sour wine, and your camel's food shall be half chaff, while he will at the same time so smile and affirm, as to cheat you, before he has done, out of your own judgment. As I have heard the prophets read and the law, they command not only to say prayers, offer sacrifices, and go up to Jerusalem at the feasts, but to be an honest man besides. Is it not so?"

"Surely, I should think it so."

"I warrant you it is, if it is anything. I truly do not keep the law any way; I am a camel-driver; but this that I have said is the sort of keeping I see in Cæsarea and Jerusalem. Ah! what do I not know of some of those long-faced Pharisees? Many is the time in Cæsarea I have tracked them from the very doors of the synagogues to their haunts. For me, I love an honest sinner like myself. None of your two-

faced, smooth-tongued, rotten-hearted knaves, who having cheated the world all the week, think on the Sabbath to cheat God as well by their fastings and prayers. It is these who choose the highest places in the synagogues, where we can all look on and see the game that is played, that teach us to despise not them only, but the law too. Such have more to answer for than their own wickedness in the judgment-day, who have not only not kept the law themselves, but hindered those who would. There's many a ruler of a synagogue I have known, who, if he were in the world to come to keep company with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob for his reward, it would not be good company enough for Ziba the camel-driver."

"In the new kingdom you speak of under Herod, or some other, you will look, I suppose, to see all these things mended ; shall you not ?"

"I know not as to that," replied he ; "as I said, I shall then look to have plenty of wine—sweet wine, too, not such as Jael's—and other such things, for the reason which is plain enough, that the Romans will be driven off, and all that now is stolen from us and carried away beyond sea will remain here, and the poor will have their share of it ; and perhaps vastly more than this, for the priests tell of great things ; but I believe less than half of what a priest says. Some of them say the kingdom will last a thousand years, and some for ever. Many good things might come to pass in that long time, or even if less than half as long."

"But do you not suppose, that under Messiah men will be honest—honest and good ?"

"I know not how that is to be," said Ziba ; "I hear not much about it, that is all I can say. They talk of great riches, great armies, and victories, and of having Rome under our feet, and Romans for slaves—dogs as they are ; but they say little about keeping the law any better then than now. And, by my head, I think if there was much to be done about that, we should hear less of the new kingdom than we do.

But come, let us prick on; there are travellers yonder about to meet us, from whom we may learn news; let us come up with thy companion, who lies in wait for them under the shade."

So saying, he urged his beast into a round pace, and we soon came up with those who were advancing from the region of the Jordan, but who, before we reached them, were pausing with Onias beneath the shadows of some spreading trees. They were a company of merchants from Philadelphia, beyond Jordan, bound to Cæsarea. After the tedious ceremonies of salutation were over, which in these parts occupy as much space as in Rome the business itself would for which they are the preparation, Onias first asked them of the prosperity of their city, and then of the country round about them, and if there were of late anything new concerning Arabia; which questions, when they had been diligently answered, and they had asked as many in their turn, and received the desired replies from Onias, my uncle then inquired of them concerning the rumour which had met him at the inn of Jael at Thebez, of a prophet who had made his appearance in the neighbourhood of the Jordan, and whether they had either seen him or heard of him. He who seemed to be the principal person of the company replied, that they had crossed the Jordan at the ford just above Enon, and had slept in that village, where, indeed, they had heard of the person of whom Onias spoke, but he was not now in those parts.

"What," asked Onias eagerly, "think the people of him? and has he been at Enon?"

"He has not been at Enon," answered the other, "but passed by on this side the river. The people, however, seemed to think, from what was reported of him on all sides, that he was surely a prophet. They could speak of nothing else at the inn where we lodged; but we were too weary with the heat and travel of the day to give much heed to what was said; besides, that affairs of our own were to be transacted. If, as would

seem, you are bound to the same ford at which we have crossed, you will learn there more than we can tell. It were better, I doubt not, for this wanderer, whosoever he may be, to stay at home and attend to affairs that concern himself alone. He who would mend the state does the most in that way, and most surely, when he keeps himself and his own affairs whole. The Lord will prosper the diligent. And when all are diligent, each in his own business, then riches are multiplied, and the whole land is a garden."

"The wisdom of what you say," replied Onias, "is past all doubt. But then, when men are not diligent, when the wicked rule in the land, when it is because men are the subjects of sin that they will not mind their affairs and their households, what then shall be done? Before they will become diligent, they must be brought away from their wickedness; they must be made to know that it is their sin that stands between them and their own prosperity and the prosperity of their country; and that except they repent, the vengeance of God, it may well be feared, shall be poured out upon them, as of old on these cities of the plain. But who shall do this great work? Where is the rabbi or the priest among us who hath either wisdom or power to reach ears that are dull as adders', and hearts hard as the nether mill-stone? Verily, we may despair for Israel, except the Lord have compassion, and send unto us whom he will."

"When the Lord sends or speaks," rejoined the other, "the signs of his presence will be such as the eye cannot be blind to, but will see and confess as it does the sun over our heads. I learn not of any such signs in this case; but rather that he of whom we speak is some houseless traveller, sordid and poor in his attire, and likely to be in the keeping of some devil rather than his own wits. But you will hear and know what you wish as you travel further on. In the meanwhile, the Lord keep you. Come, neighbours."

Saying this, and giving a blow to his ass, he started on his way, followed by his companions and their loaded camels, not concealing by their loud talk and laughter, as they drew off, that they held my uncle's earnestness in light esteem. After the civil encounter of the first meeting, which we had observed as we rode up, I had looked for a quite different interview; but Ziba's opinion was perhaps a just one, that they had hoped to drive some trade with us, and seeing no hope of that as the conversation was prolonged, but that we were quite another sort of travellers, they scrupled not to vent their vexation in the way they did.

As they disappeared, Onias broke forth: "A besotted and ignorant people! what hope is there of Judea? The one part are slaves to Rome, another part are slaves to riches, and another part are slaves to sin. Yet is the Lord as capable to turn the heart of this people, corrupt and stiff-necked as they are, as I the head of the beast I ride. One thing is not easy, and another hard to him; one is not more easy than another, nor one more hard than another: he can take up all Rome in the palm of his hand, and blow it into air, even as fine dust; and this great plain of the earth itself can he crumble into atoms by a word of his mouth, and it shall vanish forever. What to him, then, is Judea, and the hearts of all her people? Can he not turn them whithersoever he will? and is there any to hinder? The end of time is come, even upon us; the days are fulfilled; and that which all who yet have hearts desire, shall come. This broad land which to-day lies cursed and barren, delivered over to the hands of strangers, may even to-morrow, if the Lord so will (and ere long the word shall go forth), sit beneath the shadow of her own king, and blossom as a garden of roses. Shall Pilate longer reign where David did? Shall this Roman Nebuchadnezzar from the other side of the Great Sea for ever hold us in this worse than Babylonian bondage?"

These things, and more than these, did Onias pour forth, rather as if uttering what was passing through his mind, because it would come to the lips, than as addressing me. Ziba was in great astonishment, and doubted whether he, who was so caught away from earth, were not himself possessed of a spirit of prophecy. He said, "that although he was but as one of the wicked, yet when he heard one speak who seemed filled with a good spirit, he felt moved toward him, and could be easily turned about by him as he would. The priests and elders," he continued, "move me not, seeing they read and speak as though their own hearts gave not out what they said, but their lips only ; so that if it appear that they themselves who know the law best, and are the priests of God, are not persuaded of what they declare, that it is true and excellent, how can they persuade me ? I have ever seen that when I take a traveller through steep and rocky passages, full of windings and pitfalls, and reported to be beset by robbers, they ever have the faith which they behold in me ; but I cannot believe the priest, because he believes not himself."

I could not deny that he had reason on his side in some good measure, and that until the synagogue was reformed, he would find little motive to change his way of life ; yet I added, that surely all the synagogues were not alike, nor all the rulers and priests : he ought not to make one stand for all : doubtless there were those who were as pure as the law they taught ; I had known such in Cæsarea, and even in Rome. Ziba, however, never had. He believed there were none such, and that their hypocrisies had succeeded in blinding me. So have I found this poor man, even as I have found many in Rome, having much good in his heart, and many desires of what is better, yet, in truth, believing in nothing, and trusting none, by reason of the deceits and vices which he had seen to be practised by those who have been the ministers of religion.

Good men will ever make good men. And even in the precincts, my mother, of the idol temples of Rome, have I seen virtues to grow up and flourish, and all good habits and customs prevail among the worshippers, not, as I believe, because there was any force in the faith they had, or thought they had, in their gods, nor because they themselves thought there was, but only because they beheld sincerity, goodness, and simplicity in the lives of the priests who urged such virtues upon them. If a priesthood is pure, the faith of the people will be stable ; the reality which their own hearts tell them religion is, will not be contradicted by what they see in the characters of those who profess to know and believe more than themselves ; but so soon as the worshipper suspects the sincerity or the virtue of the man who makes it his business to teach virtue and the law of faith, then it seems to him the foundations on which he had been standing are taken away from under his feet, and all is darkness and doubt. What has it been—why should I forbear to utter the truth—but thy virtues, my mother, which have preserved some faint light of faith in my soul. Long before I could declare the reasons why it was so, I felt that the worship of our synagogue was day by day uprooting the early religion which by thy care had been planted in my heart. I used to tell you of my thoughts, and how it was because of what I knew or believed to be true of our priest, that I felt my youthful reverence for holy things to decline and die within me, and how it was because of what I saw and heard of the divine virtues of the venerable Saturnus, that I was almost persuaded to become a worshipper in the temple of Jupiter. They who gathered round that excellent old man, and listened to his maxims, but, more than all, were daily witnesses of the manner of his life, felt that there was nothing so worthy and real as what they saw in him, and they strove to become like him. This was true faith. I heard and admired with them

as often as I could elude thy watchful eye, and it was only thy image ever rising before me that saved me from throwing myself into the arms of an abhorred idolatry. For I said, if it is not what Saturnus believes of his Jupiter that draws me toward his temple—and I scarce know what he believes; I am persuaded, moreover, that, whatever it is, it is a miserable superstition—but simply the divine beauty of his spirit and life, why for that should I esteem his religion more than my own? Shall the virtues of Saturnus the pagan weigh with me more than those of Naomi the Jewess? Are they either more in number or more god-like? If the virtues of the pagan bind the youth who hear him to his faith, shall not the virtues of Naomi bind her son to his? So that often as for reasons which thou knowest well I was tempted to renounce the religion of my father, and all belief of every kind and name, it was still my unwavering faith in the reality of virtue, as seen embodied in my mother, that held me back, and taught me patience and humility. I waited; and distrusting my power at so young an age to determine questions so weighty and difficult, resolved to believe in virtue, if in nothing else, because I saw in thee that it was a something as stable and real as the earth itself, and beautiful as the light.

Our road since we left the inn of Jael had run through a country with a surface gently flowing like the summer waves of the sea, rising and falling, but never with abruptness, save that on our left at this point of our journey there rose a steep and lofty hill. Soon leaving that behind, the prospect before and around us was wholly that of an extensive plain, crowded with villages, covered with an abundant vegetation, and giving tokens in the richness of the soil, and universal verdure, of our approach to the Jordan. As occasionally we emerged from the deep and grateful shades which were cast over our road by the heavy-leaved trees of these warmer regions, and

gained a slight elevation, we could see the waters of the river here and there gleaming through the foliage. Next Enon rose before us, standing not far from its banks on the hither side, and Onias having affairs to despatch in that place, we made towards it, although, as you will perceive by the marks which I have set down of our journey, it lies far out of a direct course from the hills of Samaria to Beth-Harem. It was necessary that Onias should tarry there a space; and besides, as he assured me, although coming by the ford of Enon would extend the line of our travel, yet should we be abundantly repaid by the greater pleasantness of the road, especially by that part of it which, between Enon and Beth-Harem, lies on the bank of the river, and on its eastern side.

After parting from the three merchants of Philadelphia, the day being then far advanced, we met abundance of travellers, both such as belonged to those regions, and such as had come from different parts of Peræa and Arabia. Of many had we made the same inquiries as of the merchants, and from all obtained what established the truth of the rumour which had first met us at Thebez—that a stranger from the south country had appeared on the Jordan and in the districts on either side, about whom the people were greatly stirred, but concerning whom they did not seem to have learned anything from which much could be gleaned as to his real character and purpose. The expectations of the whole nation being towards the appearance of him whom they believe to have been promised, they readily behold in any remarkable qualities of an individual some of the features which they expect to distinguish that great personage, and thus easily deceive themselves. What we desire to see we are apt to think we see. So that, although in this John from Hebron there be in truth none of the signs which should announce the Messiah, all are wondering within themselves, and to one another, whether it may not be he. At Enon, while Onias

was prosecuting his business with those whom he wished to see, we still continued to ask the same questions of all, as on the road, but without arriving at any knowledge that was much more distinct ; and what we heard from one often was at variance from what we heard from another—and this, notwithstanding John had already been on the Jordan near the place, accompanied by some who had joined him as followers ; so difficult is it where the expectations are of a certain character, to make up our judgments according to the real appearances before us, rather than in agreement with what exists only in our own minds.

When Onias had ended what he desired to accomplish in Enon, we set forth towards the Jordan, which now lay but a few furlongs from the town. I approached with curiosity and delight this stream, of which the name and history had been so long familiar. I well remembered how, as the feet of the priests who bore the ark touched its brim, the waters dried up, and after they had passed over, the multitudes of Israel followed in safety, notwithstanding it was the time of harvest, and the Jordan overflowed all his banks—a miracle which, for its greatness, is like those wrought in Egypt, and which together show so evidently that God manifested himself in those days to such, and for such things, as he deemed worthy. At this time of the year we found the river deprived of more than half its waters by reason of the drought ; and so, although it seemed broad, broader, in truth, than I had looked to find it, yet did it also appear much more shallow, seeing that I had overlooked the fact, that, like all rivers which take their rise among mountains, it is subject to great inequalities, being swollen so as to overflow its banks at the time the snows melt and the early rains descend, and then during the great heats of summer being diminished in like proportion below its ordinary size. The banks were thickly grown over with every kind of shrub and tree, here and there overhanging the waters, then

retreating and leaving an open space of clear grassy slope. The gaudy flowers, too, of this climate were everywhere glittering in the sunlight, or else themselves sending out rays of light by reason of their gorgeous colours, as they grew among the deep shadows of the trees. Birds, too—now, indeed, silent through the heat of the day, but of hues like flame—glanced hither and thither amongst the branches of the willow or the broad terebinth. And up and down on either side of the stream were companies of the inhabitants of the neighbouring cities and villages reposing in the shade, or watching their children as they pursued the shining insects that darted through the air; or venturing into the Jordan, sported in its swift running waters. The scene on either side of the stream, as it wound its way along, was very beautiful to the eye and the mind; and as we slowly bent our steps to the water where the ford was, and entered it, we could not refuse—so inviting was all around, and not least the cool waves running below—to linger and pause frequently as we went over, each confessing that if we sought to indulge our humour, it would be to remain just where we were through the heat of the day. But as such pleasures must have an end, we presently reached the further side of the river, and pursued our way on the eastern bank down towards Beth-Harem.

“Now,” exclaimed Onias, as we left the waters of the river and ascended the opposite bank, “are we within the dominions of Herod, who is in part at least a Hebrew; yet whether a Hebrew but in part or not, it is he who should now be king of Judea. Philip is not he: he is too much the lover of peace for such times as are to unfold. Herod was born for them.”

“Yet even Herod,” said I, “is subject to Rome. It matters little who is king of the Jews, so long as he holds of the Romans, not of us or of God.”

“As the eye judges, Herod is truly subject to

Rome," replied Onias. "But there are those who serve and yet govern. Is Tiberius or Sejanus truly emperor? There are those who appear, indeed, to be among the low and humble, who yet, by reason of the soul that reigns within, are higher than monarchs. Some, though there be a crown of universal dominion on their heads, are yet as nothing, nay, as dirt, in comparison of him on whom the glory of the Lord rests. Tiberius is to-day the absolute lord of the universe, but another may be more than that to-morrow, before whom that great emperor shall humble himself as a slave. Hast thou faith, Julian, in the prophets?"

I said that I had been duly instructed in them by the piety of my mother, and that I doubted not they were moved of God.

"Of whose kingdom then speaks the prophet, when he says that his kingdom shall be everlasting?"

"I suppose I should answer of the Messiah; but I pretend not to know with exactness the sense of the prophets. I am but a learner as yet in my own religion."

"Nevertheless," said my uncle, "thou hast answered well. Doubtless it is said of the Messiah. His kingdom shall be from sea to sea. Now, even now, is the time it were come. But if God's kingdom come now, and be universal, that of Rome shall be swallowed up and lost as a drop of water in the sea. May this thy kingdom speedily come, O Lord, and thy servant behold its glory!"

My uncle, as he uttered this ejaculation, fell into his musing frame, from which it was a long time ere he showed any disposition to return and resume his discourse with me, which indeed gives me not much light, from his refraining, as it were, to say all that is in his thought. He does little more at any time than approach the borders of somewhat that lies in his mind, never fairly laying open the regions about which he excites your curiosity. I presently, however, asked him of Herod, of whom we had just spoken, and of

whom I knew little, and of a brother of his who held some small government under Rome in the eastern part of Judea.

"Herod," he replied, "about whom you inquire, the oldest living son of the great Herod, and often known under the name of Antipas, is one well able to reign over a larger dominion than that which he possesses, which is indeed but a pitiful rood of earth, if one compares the territory with Rome, or with what he is fit to govern. He is, of all the sons of Herod the Great, of the nearest approach to his father in respect to the vigour of his mind, and all qualities that go to make a monarch worthy of his name and empire; especially does he possess that far and deep-seeing eye that penetrates the purposes and minds of other men, and knows how to lead them, and cause them to work his will, whether or not they themselves would choose to do so. He amazes by the sagacity and subtlety of his devices; for while you have deemed him to have been engaged in one enterprise, or compassing one object, suddenly it appears that he had a quite different end in view, and those who look on can only admire at a power which they cannot comprehend or measure. A great destiny awaits him. The central sun of Rome may yet grow dim before what is now the feeble glimmering star of Galilee. More surely and sooner," continued Onias, "might we look for such issue, could he work according to his will with his brother who governs as tetrarch in Trachonitis, Philip. But in him we find none of the signs of true greatness. He is a Jew indeed, but a Jew with none of the ambition of the Jew. It is enough for him to govern his little kingdom in peace, administering justice among his subjects, enlarging the borders of their prosperity, and paying duly, and without any signs of discontent, his subsidies to Rome, the proof and the badge of slavery. Though mild and gentle among his people, he is yet obstinate and intractable to the will of his brother, who hath

hitherto failed, with all his skill, to pour into him a portion of his own spirit, and wake to life a soul dead to his own honour and the greatness of his country. Were another Antipas in the seat of Philip, another day would soon arise upon unhappy Israel. Yet though to the eye of man mountains of obstruction intervene, all is easy and the way smooth to the power of the God of Abraham. A reed from the banks of Jordan in his hand shall break in pieces the earth; and by one, as well as by two or a multitude, can he confound the counsels of princes, and bring them and all their greatness to nought. What was the rosy-cheeked David, the little son of Jesse, with his sling and stones, to the giant of the Philistines with his sword like a weaver's beam? Truly in himself he was as a lamb before a lion lean with hunger. But seeing Jehovah was in the arm and sling of the boy, of what avail were the sword and strong armour of Goliath? It matters not neither how nor where Philip bestows himself, nor whether he gives or withholds; himself, not Judea, will be the loser. So, too, touching him who dwells in Jerusalem, Herod Philip, the affairs of the world can proceed without him, even though he should refuse to his brother the little power which, by reason of his descent alone, he holds over the populace of the capital. Nevertheless, what he may refuse might be won through another."

"You mean," I said, "his wife?" For I had heard of her through Philip and Anna in Cæsarea.

"Yes," replied Onias, "I speak of her, the daughter of Aristobulus, in whom lives all the greatness of the great Herod. Had the providence of God made her a son instead of a daughter, the world had now been full of her fame. Even as a woman, much might be achieved; but what can a lioness do yoked to a mule? She must first break away from the unequal bonds that yet hold her. Thou hast not seen Herodias, Julian?"

"I have never been in Jerusalem," I replied.

"But she is often in Cæsarea," said Onias, "and was there, as I have heard, at the games of Herod; was it not so?"

"She was looked for, as was also her daughter, with great expectation," I replied, "but they came not."

"Doubtless," answered Onias, "her husband had intelligence of the expected tumult, and so forbore to put himself where his presence might have been taken amiss by Pilate. Yet I marvel why Herodias went not, since it is no less than the very life of her life to oppose her proud and lofty beauty to the milder charms of Procla, and so divide at least, if not bear away with triumph, the praises of the theatre. Mayhap, however, Antipas was in Jerusalem."

These things I set down, my mother, as answering the questions you have asked concerning this family. As I learn more from thy close and reluctant brother, more will I deliver.

We were now far on our way to Beth-Harem, and ere the sun should leave us, we should easily reach it. I was truly desirous to arrive, as with my common impatience I had become weary of my long communion with Onias, relieved only at times by a little jesting with Ziba, and not less with the sameness of verdant beauty which stretched all along on either bank of the Jordan. Yet was it, I believe, still more than these, a desire to behold the residence of Onias and the fair Judith, that occasioned my dissatisfaction and some complaints, I fear, of the slow progress we made. Much had been told me of the estates of Onias by Philip, but more by Anna of Judith, his daughter, "who," she would say, "is the bright star of Beth-Harem, and of all that region, and in her light you, Julian, will forget this little dark shadow in Cæsarea; but then, what is that to me? I am content it should be so, while I can have the love and friendship of Philip." Alas! my mother, that a light like that of Anna should have been so early quenched! To her and her brother do my thoughts continually turn back,

whenever the novelty or beauty of some present object does not take me away from myself. If Philip was rash and over-confident, he was, nevertheless, brave, and a willing sacrifice for the freedom of his country. No thought of his own glory, I believe, ever had a moment's place in his mind; it was rage at the oppression of Judea, and a thirst of revenge, that drove him on, and swayed him so as to blind him to the obstructions which mountain-high lay between him and the attainment of his end; nor only that, but made his ruin and death as certain as his attempt. Though I could never approve as wise the measures which he pursued, and think it was only passion and the spirit of revenge that could justify them, which truly justified all that he did, and would have justified all he could have done or devised, yet do I abhor the wanton tyranny which drove him to his rebellion, and wait with impatience for the day that shall witness a just retaliation. And this the more, as the form of Anna rises before me as at the moment I last beheld her, transfixed by a Roman javelin; that child of truth and nature, who loved her country and her faith as Roman never did, but who loved her brother more, and concealed it not, but would confess that though her reason sometimes doubted him, or rebelled, her heart was ever stronger than her reason, and made her the very counterpart of himself. Certain I am, that no other will ever again so possess my soul as Anna; yet had she lived, who could have shared any portion of that love which was no longer hers to give, but was all her brother's? Anna dead is to me, perhaps, as much as Anna living ever could have been.

As thoughts and remembrances like these arose in my mind on the way, I hardly wished to see Beth-Harem. I would rather dwell among the dead than the living. I cared neither for Onias nor Judith; but they quickly gave way again to others, and I was ready to press my uncle to make more speed. At a moment when I was in this latter mood, thy brother

said, "Behold, there are the walls of Beth-Harem ! We must now for a space part from the river and turn our faces toward the hills."

The sun was not far from his setting, and was pouring over the land a whole flood of yellow light, as we thus left the river, and moved on among the more broken and uneven lands which lay toward the east. When we had continued not long in the midst of such scenes, passing among the rich fields of the husbandmen, with their simple dwellings half-hidden by overhanging vines, or buried beneath fruit-trees, we at length entered upon lands which, by the manner in which they were cultivated, and their great extent, showed that we were approaching the dwellings of some of the richer proprietors of the soil. Soon, upon emerging from a grove, through which our way had wound along, we came upon open level grounds, covered with vineyards, olive-orchards, fields of grain, and wide-spreading pastures, in the centre of which, upon a gentle elevation, stood ranges of low but extensive buildings, which I needed not my uncle's exclamations to assure me were the dwelling of Onias. A few lofty palms, and a single terebinth of a great size, were the only trees immediately near it, as, except that for a considerable space in every direction there stretched out a smooth and verdant floor of turf, the grounds on all sides were usefully devoted to gardens and vineyards. Over and beyond the fields and buildings of the "prince of these regions," were visible the walls and towers of Beth-Harem, giving me to see that while it was not a place of the largest size, neither was it insignificant either for its extent, or the structures, whose outlines could be distinctly discerned, gilded as they now were with the last warm rays of the declining sun. Quickening our pace, we soon threaded the winding way which led from the public road to the house. As we rapidly approached, Judith, followed by her maids, hastened to meet us. Onias, springing from his horse, tenderly embraced and kissed

her, asking a thousand questions of her welfare and of that of all the household. Then turning to me, he said, "and here is thy half Gentile cousin of Rome, with his Gentile name, Julian, the son of Naomi; he is now thy charge. Let him have no reason to say that the barns and store-houses of Onias refused to open for him their best treasures." "For his mother's sake and his own," replied the daughter, "he is welcome; his Roman name shall not deprive him of Jewish hospitality." Onias then leading the way, we entered the house.

The refreshment of the bath, in which, and in other forms of washing, the Jews of Palestine indulge yet more than we of Rome, soon restored me to myself after the heat and fatigue of our long journey. The household of Onias I found to be numerous, composed, however, not of his own descendants—as Judith is his only child—but of members of our large family from every part of the world, whom he gathers round him, even as a patriarch of old, exercising over them a sort of lower providence. When we had eaten, we ascended to the spacious roof to pass the evening hours. A broad tent was here spread to defend from the dews which at this time of the year begin to fall, and from the cool breezes which sometimes spring up in the night, even after the day has been oppressive through its heat. Here we either sat and conversed, or else walking about, I learned from the mouth of Judith the names and directions of the principal objects in the scene, being lighted up by a brighter moon than it is ever our fortune to behold in Rome.

Onias seemed little disposed to join our discourse; yet, whatever was his preference for a close communion with himself alone, he never refused to lend his ear when Judith spoke. We had been talking of Rome, Cæsarea, Philip and Anna, of Pilate and Herod, to all which Onias had given but little attention, when Judith turned to him and said, "I hope, father, that now these long expeditions will cease; or

if they must still be undertaken, that you will be persuaded to send our new cousin in thy stead, who has not as yet seen that region. But what of so great moment can a vine-dresser, here on the banks of the Jordan, have to do with princes?"

"My daughter," replied Onias, "seek not to know what may not be revealed—at least not as yet, nor to woman's ears. Let this suffice thee—that the vine-dresser of Beth-Harem is not leagued with princes for any end which his daughter could not approve, or Jehovah smile upon."

Judith, who had evidently spoken in a sportful manner, seemed grieved by the grave reply of her father, and hastened to say, "that she doubted not her father; yet, could she not but apprehend possible evil, when he was departing so far from his wonted manner of life, and binding himself to associates so different from his former ones, as Herod of Galilee."

Onias rose and walked to and fro upon the roof.

Presently he asked if any had been impatient to see him while absent. Judith replied, none, save a messenger from Machærus. Had he brought letters? asked Onias. No: his communication must be with Onias himself.

He then, kissing his daughter, and commending her to her bed, and me to early repose after the toil of our journey, descended to his apartment, we following him, and resorting also to ours.

LETTER VII.

I AWOKE, my mother, not in Rome, though my dreams had carried me there, and placed me at your side, vainly attempting to win away your attention from the book of the prophets, which, according to your wont, in the morning's prime, you were diligently pondering. It was the rebuke of your sometimes severe countenance at an impertinent jest of mine

that broke my slumbers. Slowly the mists of the night drew away, and left me in the full consciousness of my position; my eyes fell upon unaccustomed objects; the open casement held up before me a distant prospect of stream and plain, hill and tower, such as I never before had seen; the song of birds, whose strains were new and strange; voices of labourers, or of the servants of the household, calling to each other in the Syriac tongue—not even yet an agreeable melody—met my ear; these, and other sights and sounds, by degrees informed me that I had been sleeping neither in Italy nor Rome, but was still a sojourner in the barbarous clime of the further Palestine, even upon the outskirts of the Asiatic deserts. In that sense of utter feebleness of the will with which we first wake in the morning, it seemed to me that I would renounce all knowledge of other places and people for the sake of being once more in Rome. I cared not for Onias, Judith, Judea, nor the whole East, in comparison with Rome and thee. But action, and the bath, and the fresh air of the house-top, soon scattered these worse than dreams, and restored me to my manhood.

In a part of the dwelling not far from where I had slept, I found Onias and Judith, with others of their large household, awaiting me at a table well covered with bread, fruits, wines, and dainties unknown to the vocabulary of Roman art. Thy stern and contemplative brother saluted me, methought, with no very encouraging fervour, but very much as if he were addressing a new comer as little welcome as expected; but this I regarded not, for I knew, that so soon as his dreamy thoughts could be gathered together, some from Jerusalem, some from Galilee, and some from Rome, he would comprehend who I was, and I should be dealt with accordingly. From Judith my greeting was quite otherwise. She hastened to meet me as I entered, and by the natural ardour of her manner, and the glow of her most expressive countenance, made me feel that I was in but another home. Indeed, my

mother, thy niece is very beautiful. Shall I speak of Rebecca, or Ruth, or Rachel, or Judith of old? Rebecca at the well, with our great father Isaac, as tradition paints her, was not to be placed by the side of Judith, the daughter of Onias, when she rose from her embroidered couch and gave me the salute of peace, and then proffered me the refreshments of the loaded board. I believe I only gazed at her in return, and gave as many signs of distraction as Onias himself; for before I had fully recovered myself, I heard from one who was near, "Can it be that Rome hath no women?" Those few words, not intended to reach my ear, brought me to myself, and gave a new direction to my eyes, and unloosed my tongue. There was then no want either of food for discourse, or of disposition to engage in it, save on the part of thy brother, who during the whole repast spake never a word, unless it were in reply to questions urgently pressed upon him, and those relating to the matters immediately before us.

No sooner were our duties discharged towards both ourselves and the substantial dishes that had been set for our refreshment, than, Judith leading the way, we turned from the apartment where we had been sitting, and were conducted by her to an extensive portico, stretching along the side of the house that overlooks the Jordan and the vineyards which lie along his banks. The single terebinth of a giant size, of which I have already made mention, stood near this portico, and spread its broad arms so far, that some of them reached and cast a grateful shade over the spot where we sat, defending our eyes agreeably against the rays of a bright summer's sun. The dwelling of Onias I could now observe to be even more extensive than in the twilight of the preceding evening I had supposed, and to be composed of parts varying greatly in their forms, giving signs of having been built at periods remote from each other, and by those who paid no regard to any other rule than to indulge each his own

particular fancy in what he added or altered. As I have said, the building is low, and of but a single storey; yet its lowness is in seeming only, owing to the large space which it covers. The rooms within are lofty; and the portico where we sat—of Roman construction and order—is of a height not less than that which adorns the house of Druses on the Palatine. I was not surprised to find Roman architecture here beyond the Jordan; for since the power of the Herods has been felt in Judea, there is scarce a considerable town but is adorned with Roman structures; so that to behold their forms, as I travelled through the country, lifting themselves up on every side, overtopping and outshining the native buildings, it truly seemed to me that I was in Italy rather than elsewhere. Sebaste, Tiberias, Gamala, Cæsarea, and Herodium not far from Machærus toward the Dead Sea, are all Roman or Greek. The older portions of the dwelling of thy brother are neither Greek nor Roman, but in a much earlier manner. They are built of huge stones, rudely put together, but in a manner to defy the power of time to disjoint or cast them down; of the same manner and form with those which are found in all the country stretching to the east of the Peræa and Trachonitis; but by whom, and in what age erected, no history relates. They appear, travellers report, to be rather the work of Titans than of men, and have served for the dwellings of successive generations.

Those parts of thy brother's house which are the work of more modern times, bear small resemblance to each other, or to the original and older portions, but spread themselves out in every various direction and form, agreeing only in the same general elevation; to this, however, there is the exception of a single broad tower rising to such a height as to overlook the whole region round about. Another portico runs along a part of the front which faces towards the south, resembling that in which we were now sitting, but of less extent. A large space, as an inner court, is en-

closed by the sides of the building, where a fountain plays, and over which is often drawn, during the hot days of summer, an awning of cloth, upon a frame prepared for it, as a protection from the heat, and as yielding an agreeable shade. It is without difficulty partially broken up or removed, when either more of light, or air, or warmth is desired, or when it becomes needful either to raise objects from the court below to the roof above, or to lower them down. The proper ascent to the roof is by stairs from within the dwelling, yet it can also be ascended from without.

"You are pleased, as I judge by the direction of your eye," said Judith when we were seated, "with these proofs of a Roman taste. They cause you to feel as if you had wandered but a little way from home, and were not quite among either strangers or barbarians. Of your family we have scarce heard anything more than that you have adopted the Roman religion with Roman customs."

"You have rightly judged," I answered, "that I am pleased with these signs of Roman taste in this noble portico, as well as in many other things. The useful and ornamental arts I would have common to all, and by no means confined to one people or one faith. It is no good reason, because Judea holds one form of religion, in which she excels other nations, that she should reject forms of art in which others excel her. Do you not think so?"

"I do indeed," Judith replied. "Nations are more likely to live in harmony the more they can innocently adopt of each other's customs, as well as the more they can see of each other. And so thought our ancestor, Alexander, to whom we owe most of these modern additions; but so thinks not Onias, the son of Alexander." In saying which Judith raised her eyes from the embroidery on which she was employed, and turned them on her father.

"Verily I do not," rejoined Onias. "This worship of everything Roman is the new idolatry, which, not

less than that of old, into which our rebellious forefathers were ever falling, shows us false to our true descent, unworthy of our name and faith, rebels against God, and if we repent not, destined quickly to perish. We are one-half of us pagans, heathens, Romans, Greeks, everything in Jew's clothing. The last offence is, to be ashamed of what God hath made us, and that the Jew is. Surely God's judgments will overtake and overwhelm us. My father—may he rest in Abraham's bosom—was a good man, yet nevertheless a worshipper of idols not less than Ephraim. In this, at least, may I be permitted to boast that my hatred burns toward all but Judea. Julian, I rejoice to tell thee, my daughter, is better than by your first words you have taken him for; he has in part at least renounced the false faith in which he was nurtured, and returned to that of his fathers. Born a Jew, but living thereafter and believing as a Gentile, he has now, since his foot has touched the soil of Judea, and his eye seen her dishonour and her wrongs, turned back to what he was when his only learning was such as fell upon his ear as he sat an infant upon the knees of Naomi. If my ear deceived me not, thy cousin last evening gave thee in part a history of his life."

"He spoke," said Judith, "of Cæsarea, of Anna and Philip, and of his adventures in their behalf; but of his faith I could gather but little. It is, in truth, a greater joy than I looked for, to greet him not only as one of the household of Alexander, but also of that of Abraham and Moses."

I then, for the satisfaction of the fair Judith, imparted to her much of what I had already, on our journey thither, related to thy brother concerning the earlier part of my life and the causes that had led on to changes so considerable. She heard with deep attention, her hands often ceasing from their employment, and her countenance turned towards me, showing her too much engaged in what was said to bethink

herself whether she were listening to any other than a familiar and long accustomed voice. I wished my story longer for the sake of such a hearer. In the manner in which she yields to nature in the ardent expression of her countenance, being governed by no other power than her own feelings, Judith reminds me of Anna; but while Anna was too much swayed by others, Judith is mistress of herself, and with all her passion, shows a firmness which could not be turned from any path she deemed right. So at least I judge now, after so brief an acquaintance.

When I had ended, Judith said, "I praise God, Julian, that he has brought you back safe amongst your own people, and to his own service. But then, I at least will tell you, what from your narrative you seem not to have learned at Cæsarea, that though Judea is trodden upon and oppressed, as you yourself have witnessed, it is not in her innocence that this has happened; she is not guiltless before God. Think not that she suffers but for her iniquities. It is these that have brought her so low, blotted out her name even from among the nations, and caused that, for these many centuries, no prophet of God hath come as of old to instruct and hear us. Wickedness is in the land. They who sit in Moses' seat are usurpers. The law is honoured by the lips, but broken in the life. Cunning men have put their own conceits in the place of the word of God, and pass them off upon the people for his own truth. Through the multitude of such interpretations and the impudence of the priests, the law is set aside and of no effect. It is not, Julian, deliverance from Rome alone that can heal our diseases. An Egyptian bondage (and ours is lighter) were not to be deplored like this great corruption of the heart. We need a physician of the soul, who shall thoroughly purge it, and make it a dwelling cleansed of every foul thing—a habitation meet for the spirit of God. Freedom from Roman power could not do this. Alas! I fear it would but

swell our pride the more, and remove farther off than ever the day when God shall visit his people. Till he shall see signs of repentance he will never come—never. Jordan would sooner flow back to his springs.”

As Judith said these things, tears stood in her eyes, which were lifted from her work and fixed upon the flowing river as it wound along gleaming in the sunshine.

Onias, who had been pacing to and fro along the portico, now paused before his daughter, and said—“Judith, Judith, thou art ever too exacting toward our unhappy land. Thou judgest her hardly. Her sins are manifold in truth, but still are we not of the seed of Abraham? and who, then, is like unto us? who shall ever rise into our seat? whom doth Jehovah honour but us? and for whom, as for us, are the ages waiting to bring forth their treasures? shall not the promises of God be made good? Moreover, what causeth the sin that is, and for which the land mourneth, but this thrice cursed power of the Gentile over us? While the idolater is in the land, and its ruler, will not the people, as of old, bow down and worship the images that be everywhere set up? First, my daughter, first of all must the oppressor be smitten, and the oppressed made free; then shall the seed have been destroyed that brings forth this harvest of iniquity; then shall righteousness find space and soil to grow, and the Gentile shall not be here to cause blasting and mildew.”

A maid-servant here quickly entered, and said that a messenger from Machærus was just arrived in haste, inquiring for Onias. Thy brother at this started, and with precipitation passed into the house, following the servant. When he was gone, I still sat conversing with Judith; but perceiving that her mind was now frequently withdrawn, as if possessed by other thoughts, I, too, departed, and bent my way toward the deep shades which, not far before us, I beheld covering a slight elevation on the hither bank

of the river. "Beneath those shades," said Judith, as I went, "you will find a calm and cool retreat, where, when as now the sun blazes with unusual heat, we sometimes pass the noonday hours. A simple structure stands beneath those trees, hidden now from our sight, which overlooks the river and the vineyards. I commend you to its pleasant seats." Saying these things she passed into the house, while I pursued my way to the vineyards on the banks, and the retreat to which Judith had commended me.

Passing in my way through gardens, olive grounds, and vineyards, I came at length to the spot at which I aimed, distant at least half a Roman mile from the house. The building, hardly to be seen till approached very near, I found to be of a circular form, overrun with vines, which, climbing up the columns to the roof, then hung down in a confusion of polished leaves, bright berries, flowers, and fruit. A few gray rocks here and there breaking through the ground, rendered the ascent on the side toward the river difficult, the more, as among them grew wild plants, shrubs, and flowers, according to their will, untouched by the hand of art. From the entrance, open toward the south, the eye fell first upon the slope of meadow and vineyard along the nearer bank; then upon the sacred stream as it wound slowly away, and was hidden at length by overhanging foliage; and last upon a remote prospect of hill and wood, mountain and desert, even as far as the borders of the Dead Sea, till the warm haze of those regions shut in the scene, and mingled the heavens and the earth together. I was not unwilling to enter where there was held out so rich a promise of rest and seclusion. Couches of many inviting forms standing around tempted to repose, of which, to say the truth, notwithstanding the sleep of a long night, I still had need. Here, then, I passed the morning and mid-day hours, now gazing forth upon the new scenes before me, and wondering what my course should be, and now watching the labours

of the distant husbandman as he gathered in the last returns of the harvest; sometimes buried in musings which, beginning in somewhat bright as morning, ended, as is their wont, in sleep; sometimes satisfying at once both hunger and thirst with the grapes which ministering hands had heaped upon the table; and sometimes in writing to thee, my mother, to thee whose image, waking or asleep, is ever before me, outshining all else above or below, real or unreal. No step intruded on my privacy, no sound disturbed my slumbers or my musings, save that of the bee as he flew from flower to fruit, or from fruit to flower; or of insects and birds, as, half asleep, they sent forth now and then a drowsy note, showing that they as well as I were tasting the joys of a perfect repose. Thus I either sat or lay, until the sun sinking behind the hills, and the growing coolness of the air, warned me of the hour of the evening repast; for here, as with us, the principal meal is at the close of day, when the heat hath subsided and its labour is done.

Many days like this, only varied with such changes as you, my mother, will readily imagine, now passed away. Instructed by Judith, I made myself familiar with Beth-Harem and the surrounding regions, visiting with her, or alone, all such objects and places as were worthy to be seen, either for their present interest and beauty, or for their connexion with the early history of our people. In these brief journeyings I saw and discoursed with many of the inhabitants of these parts of Judea in every condition of life. Among all I discovered a temper of dissatisfaction, and undefined desires and expectations of somewhat soon to be unfolded of advantage and glory to the land. Some great one is to arise, they are sure, who shall fulfil, in his person and his deeds, and the power of his dominion, all that seems to them foretold by their prophets. They have been much stirred by the sudden appearance of this John of Hebron on the banks and in the wilderness of Jordan;

but they do not see in him the signs of that power whose approach they are expecting, though they hold him to be one sent of God. We all desire to hear and know more of him. But, as we learn, he is now in upper Galilee.

Onias has been absent many days, insomuch that Judith wonders greatly thereat.

No more, my mother, at present. Name me with affection to our neighbours and friends, and especially to Hirpinus and Lucretius, who are returned, as I have heard, suddenly to Rome. Thou shalt soon hear again. Farewell.

LETTER VIII.

I KEEP my promise, my mother, and again present myself with wishes of health and peace.

Now when Onias had been absent, as I have said, many days, to the great concern of Judith—which in these times is not strange, for so much does wickedness abound in all parts of the land, that it is not without danger that any one trusts himself in remote or unfrequented places—he at length returned in safety indeed, but, as it seemed also, in no small perturbation of mind. His manner was more close and dark than even that which is usual with him; and it was a long time before, by our approaches, whether more or less direct, we could arrive at the causes of his discomposure. Judith, by her playfulness at some seasons, and her deep earnestness at others, seldom fails to reach her father's inward ear; and though he at times turns away even from her, yet is it done never with severity, or as if it were possible for any word from her to offend him. Although her questions now seemed to grate with harshness on his spirit, yet he refused not to answer them. "We have missed you greatly, father, these many days; but since you have been in kings' palaces, we look to

you to make amends for your long absence by the agreeable things you have to tell us. Saw you the fair daughter of Arabia? They say she is unhappy."

"Who say so?" asked Onias.

"Surely," said Judith, "you have heard it many times? I speak but the common rumour."

"I know not how it is," replied Onias; "it is a pity if it be so. The great should never marry—or not till their greatness is reached, and they can take their equal."

"Because one is great then," exclaimed Judith, "he must no longer be a man? Truly, I think, as to the women of Judea, they would rather marry a man for the reason that he hath the affections of a man, than because he has the greatness of a king or hero."

"Yet," answered Onias, "a man may find all in one, which Herod hath not. The daughter of Aretas hath a seemly beauty enough, if one, great like Herod, should have regard to the poor varnish, easily spoiled, of a fair skin—beauty more than enough to satisfy him—but the wife of Antipas should show other and greater qualities."

"Surely she hath goodness," said Judith; "so the world reports of her. And is that not much?"

"But," said Onias with force, "she hath not greatness. She is no meet companion of a king."

"Alas for us!" rejoined Judith. "Let me die a maid. As I have ever judged, no greatness is greater than a true love. But this I see is woman's folly. The poor lady must be unhappy, I think; and all we have heard of Herodias is now, I doubt not, true. Herod's journeys to Jerusalem are in search of greatness. I marvel how the Arabian king will take these rumours. Methinks if he be as fathers should be, Herod will have his hands more than full."

Seeing Onias to be disturbed, I asked, to divert the conversation to another subject, if at Machærus he had learned anything concerning the affairs of Cæsarea. This gave a new turn to his thoughts, but

at first, I feared, hardly a more grateful one, for he was manifestly troubled; but he spake with freedom.

"Cæsarea," he replied, "is, as I learn, still at peace. But between Pilate and Herod there is growing up discord, springing from that affair. Angry letters have passed between them. Pilate hath even thrown upon Herod the blame of my presence and taking part in the fight; and though he hath not continued to require my being delivered into his hands, as at first he did, he doth demand that the citadel of Beth-Harem be surrendered to the Roman forces, to be occupied by them. To this Herod must yield—he can do no otherwise—so that in not many days, troops from Cæsarea will cross the Jordan on this errand."

"It appears to me," I replied, "an unreasonable measure of precaution, much beyond any possible danger to Rome, to set a garrison to watch an individual—a vine-dresser here on the banks of the Jordan. Pilate's vigilance in Cæsarea was by no means in proportion to this."

"Doubtless, Julian, it is so. That is very true. It seems so, indeed. What, then, is true, but that Pilate sees deeper than does the common eye, and discerns dangers brewing, of which others are not aware."

"But what other dangers are there that Rome should stand in fear of?" I asked. "I can see none. The people of these regions seem quiet and at peace."

"So they appear," replied Onias; "surely there is nothing that shows otherwise. The Jew is all too well disposed to peace. In that rogue Jael, who keeps the inn at Thebez, you may behold one whom half the Jews of the land are not ashamed to resemble. Nevertheless there are others, if in the comparison few, who are of another mind. There may be danger from these. The cold rocky ground often covers over hidden and fatal fires."

"You utter yourself darkly, father," said Judith; "your words hint at more than they speak."

“Be content, my daughter, with so much ; neither look farther nor deeper than the words themselves which I have spoken. But whether there be danger or not, I cannot like to see Romans in the citadel of Beth-Harem.”

In this manner did Onias communicate with us on his return from the fortress of Machærus. What his apprehensions really are, I cannot tell, for he plainly is not disposed at present to make even Judith a partner of his thoughts. It seems not to be believed that Pilate should have any such fears of Onias or myself as to render so strong a measure necessary as that which he is about to take ; and in my judgment he hath seized upon the affair at Cæsarea merely as a pretext, which with the people will possess some show of reason, and be abundantly justified at Rome, for taking possession of a stronghold which, in the occurrence of hostilities, would be of so great advantage to the stronger party. Herod is greatly and justly incensed at so high an act of usurpation on the part of Pilate, for Beth-Harem lies within the boundaries of his tetrarchy, and is secured to him by the same acts of the senate which have given him his dominion. But what people are secure against the aggressions of Rome or her governors, when it suits their purposes to encroach upon them ? The possessions of any king tributary to her stand but in a breath. A word spoken beyond the seas in the heart of Italy, and thereupon distant empires are dismembered, kings and princes dethroned, treaties violated, territories alienated, honour, justice, and mercy, trampled under foot. Herod has no power to contend with Rome ; he can but remonstrate, and submit. But the friendship which hath heretofore subsisted between the Roman governor and the Jewish prince, is from this moment at an end ; and the mutual offences, which will now be given and taken on the one side and the other, it is not difficult to foresee will ere long lead to serious misunderstandings or open feud.

A few days have passed away, and what Onias feared and foretold has come to pass ; the Roman power has made a secure conquest in Beth-Harem. We have witnessed the arrival of the Roman troops, and the departure of those of Herod. The populace of Beth-Harem were much stirred when they beheld the soldiers of their own prince giving way before the arrival of those of their oppressors. As it was known both by couriers, who had gone before, and by the distant clouds of dust and sounds of martial music, that the Romans were actually approaching, the inhabitants of the town poured forth, both for the purpose of beholding the scene, and of giving vent to their displeasure in insults and reproaches. We also repaired to the plains, just without the walls, and standing beneath the shade of the groves which on this side the town everywhere encompass it, to which the inhabitants constantly resort for their recreations during the warmer days of summer, we awaited the approach of the soldiers. While here, we perceived that the people were well disposed to stir up strife whenever the soldiers should appear, to which they were diligently encouraged by many of the chief citizens, who, not less than the rabble of this strange people, seem ever ready for tumult, though nothing be to be gained thereby. They seem to have no control over their passions or of their expression, but utter freely whatever they conceive in their minds, regardless of the possible or probable consequences which such rashness may draw after it. As we stood conversing, we observed a large multitude posting themselves before the gates of the town, as if, by merely placing themselves there, they could obstruct the entrance of an armed force ; while the most that could happen would be, throwing an obstacle in their way for a few moments, in doing which many might, in the confusion, be trampled to death, while no possible benefit could accrue. Nor were the priests and rulers of the synagogue, Sham-

mai and Zadok, ashamed to be among them, giving edge to their passions by their gestures and language. Zadok—the more zealous of the two, whom I had before seen in Beth-Harem on the Sabbath—when he had sufficiently bestowed his counsel on the rabble, came toward us, just then when, by the braying of instruments and the neighing of horses, we knew that the Romans were at hand.

“Well met, Onias,” he cried as he joined us, hot with his exertions, and covered with dust; “and you too, sir Roman;” and laying his hand on his breast, or rather on his beard, which swept over it, and bending his head towards Judith, “thou also, fair Rose of Sharon; but, daughter, there will be dust on thy leaves if thou standest here, and that too from filthy Roman feet. Get thee farther back, child. Look to this flower, Onias; let it not be soiled.”

“Mind not me,” said Judith; “it is not dust from without that is to be feared, even though it be from Roman feet. A breath blows it off again.”

The priest cast a quick glance at the girl, as if suspecting a hidden meaning in her words. Judith immediately added, as if she had said nothing that had deserved attention, “Why, Zadok, dost thou set thyself to inflame the people more than is their nature? Their hearts are already bitter enough, methinks.”

“An eye for an eye, young woman,” he answered, “as thy princely father would say also, and this young cousin of thine too, if his face is to be read aright. An eye for an eye. Would it could be an eye for an eye. But it will be a long day before the Jew can do upon the Gentile what he hath done upon the Jew. But a long day will have its end, and may I be one to see it! There come the idolaters. See their pride in scarlet and horses, in armour and in music! Ah! if the sight of a mole is given me, their bones shall never rest in the sepulchres of their fathers. Who is he at their head, sitting, forsooth, as if he were Cæsar himself?”

One who stood by cried out, "That is Saturninus the centurion."

While he spoke, various outcries arose from the people, while some brandished their arms in a threatening manner, or else sticks and branches broken from the trees; and others, scraping up the dust in their hands, threw it into the air, or hurled it against the soldiers. Just as the centurion was passing where we stood, he could clearly perceive that the entrance to the city was wholly obstructed by a crowd of not men only, but women and children also, who thronged the way. Although, from the insults heaped upon him on every side, he could not but learn what was the temper of the people, yet he evidently did not suppose that the dense body of people before him was gathered there for any other purpose than to witness his entrance; for, waving his sword, while he put no check on the pace of his horse, he made a signal as if the way should be cleared, and as if expecting it would instantly be obeyed. But no movement followed. On the contrary, the people pressed more closely together, and increased their cries of rage; whereupon the troops were ordered to stand still, who, though they were set upon in a thousand ways of ignominious assault, yet took no note of it, save to utter in under tones fierce and bitter curses. The centurion now advanced alone toward the crowd, and speaking to them in calm and manly tones, begged them "not to hinder him in his entrance into the city; he did not come to do them any injury; but on the contrary, while he should remain among them, hoped to be a friend to them, and protect them against any evil that might threaten; perhaps he should remain but for a brief space, when the troops of Herod would be restored. If they would retire and allow him a free and easy passage, and if those who had command among them would persuade the youths and others to intermit their violence, he would promise to do

them no harm, nor suffer any of his soldiers to take any revenge for injuries already committed; but, otherwise, he might not be able to restrain their fury."

To this speech they answered only by fresh outcries, and filling the air with dust. Perceiving then that the obstinacy of the people was not to be overcome, Saturninus returned to where we were standing, together with many others of the principal citizens. Singling out Onias, without difficulty, as chief of them all, he besought him to aid him in his peaceful endeavours, that he might not be compelled to betake himself to measures of force, which he should be sorry to resort to, not less than others would be to witness or suffer them. "It must be easily in the power of such as you seem to be," he said, "to divert from their purpose a multitude of obstinate persons, who can certainly have no expectation of either fighting or overcoming, and are only indulging their passions to our great vexation and shame."

Before Onias could utter a word in reply, Zadok shouted forth, "Oh, press on, noble Roman! There is a manly victory before thee. There stand the women and little children of our city; ride over them with thy steel-hoofed horses, and historians shall chronicle thy deeds. As thou didst in Cæsarea, do here; ride swiftly, kill and slay."

"Thou misjudgest Romans," replied Saturninus with mildness, "if thou thinkest we would hurt the unarmed and helpless. But surely it is more than foolish to encourage the people in these mad insults, which can at best have no other end than to convert into enemies those who now are friends, and well disposed to remain so; but what thou wilt not do, another will, and the gods be thanked."

These last words he said as he beheld Onias hasten towards the gate, accompanied by others, and make signs for the people to disperse. As the centurion saw there was a hesitation among the crowd, some being disposed to yield, and end their idle display of

rage, he gave the order to his troop to advance at a good pace; whereupon the whole body, nothing loath, set forward to the sound of their trumpets, and at a quicker pace too than they knew was intended, which had the desired effect; for no sooner had they approached in this manner near the crowd, quickening their motion more and more, than the terror of the sight, and the fear of being trampled to death by those whom they knew they had filled with anger, caused them to scatter in great confusion on either side of the highway, many falling and rolling over each other, to the great entertainment both of the Romans and of all who beheld it; not a few hardly escaping from under the feet of the horse, nor would have done so but for the forbearance of the riders. Without further hindrance, then, they rode on to their quarters in the midst of the city.

As the last of them passed within the gates, we turned away towards thy brother's, Shammai and Zadok accompanying us.

"Ah!" said Zadok, as we walked along, "doth it not grieve the heart of a son of the freeman Abraham, who wandered to and fro, from Dan to Beersheba, without let or hindrance, whithersoever he would, and when it pleased him went even unto Egypt, his wife Sarah with him, and when it pleased him came back again, calling no man master, being a slave to no one—doth it not, I say, grieve the heart of a son of this generation to behold how we are fallen into this accursed slavery to the Gentile, our towns held by his soldiers, our steps dogged by his tax-gatherers?"

"Yet," said Judith, "is it better to wait the Lord's time for our deliverance, than seek it by our wisdom and strength. He hath promised, and the promise will be kept."

"Yea, young maiden, as in the synagogue I have oft affirmed, to which thine ears, I joy to perceive, have not been closed. He hath promised, indeed, and even in our day do we look for the fulfilment. Moses

hath spoken of the salvation, and all the prophets. But holy Daniel, hath he not in words not to be doubted or gainsaid, as I will show thee——”

“Therefore, rabbi, what I would say,” gently interposed Judith, willing to avert the threatened rehearsal, “is, that seeing the promises have been given, which, because given of Jehovah, will be kept, ought we not to wait rather in patience times which he hath appointed for our redemption, than strive to hasten them by acts of our own. We are as the blind when we aim to look into the designs of infinite intelligence, and as children who should think to move Mount Hermon, when we do aught in the hope to hinder or hasten them.”

Zadok scowled at these words of Judith, but added, “What the Lord hath done in the days past of our history to the Gentile, and the worshippers of idols, to such as gave themselves to the worship of Baal and Moloch, and even to their priests, killing and slaying, he hath taught his people to do. How oft by his prophets of old did he send them forth to destroy his despisers from off the face of the earth.”

“Doubtless,” replied Judith; “it is that for which I would have our people now wait. Let the prophet who is to come, and for whom we now wait, appear, and whither he shall lead let us follow, and what he shall command let us do; but while he comes not, let us withhold our hand. It is his bidding that shall make deeds innocent, which without shall be black with guilt.”

“Thy words,” here interposed Shammai, “are as those of the wise king of Israel; they are as apples of gold in pictures of silver.”

Judith perceived, as she thought, a hidden reproach in the words of the rabbi, and feeling as if in her earnestness she had offended against what was due to her elder, her face was covered with blushes, and fell upon her breast as she said, “Nay, rabbi, I meant not to teach, but only to speak for the cause of present

peace. Surely it can be of no avail that the scenes of Cæsarea should be repeated in Beth-Harem. We there lost those whom we greatly loved, yet hath their loss brought no profit to our nation. The power against which we would contend is too mighty to resist, if God be not on our side. Alas ! father, forgive me, I fear I teach again," and the fair girl covered her face with her hands.

"We need," said Shammai in gentler tones, "to be rather forgiven of thee. They who hold of Judas are apt to be of a harsh and hasty speech, which must make our peace with thee, my daughter. We are a fierce and contentious race."

We had now reached the dwelling of Onias. When we had entered, Judith hastened to offer for our refreshment delicious grapes, with pitchers of wine just from the presses, and water cooled with the snows of Lebanon. To the rulers she presented with her own hands the bunches that were ripest and fairest, and poured out for them the new wine, mingling with it both snow and water. Their spirit was greatly softened by the services of Judith, and by the cooling effects of the fruit and wine ; and Shammai, holding up the cup from which he had drank, and looking intently at its proportions, said—" Verily, Onias, the cunning of man is like the cunning of Him who made him. How many are his devices for our comfort and adornment ! Here is this cup of silver curiously wrought, from Rome I doubt not, these carpets from Persia, these rich hangings from Damascus, these couches of silk from the farther India. Wisdom, saith Solomon, is better than silver, or gold, or rubies. Yea, O wise man, so it is. Yet these are good, nevertheless, and thou wast too wise to give them bad names. So again he saith, there is nothing better for a man in this life than that he should eat and drink, which is also a wise saying. We may well call that wise which simply describeth a natural thing. It needed not he should have eaten

so good grapes or drunk so good wine as these to have taught him that. Every man will say it who in the morning riseth and findeth nothing better than a cake baked on the coals, with a piece of honey. As I think, it is only when a man eats or drinks that he can say his soul is without trouble. Verily he is righteous overmuch, as the great king saith, and one greatly impertinent, moreover, who, like the foolish *Ēssēnes*, seeketh to please God by refusing with contempt the good things he hath taken the pains to create, and cause the earth to bring forth for his entertainment. It would be right that such a one in the resurrection should be defrauded of his expectations. He that despiseth what the Lord hath made and pronounced good, should himself be despised, and his portion taken from him. Daughter, this wine is good. Yes, that is what I would have; let it be filled once more. Onias, who is this Saturninus, as some one called him, whom we are to have to rule over us?"

Onias replied that he knew not.

"Perhaps, then," continued the ruler, "our young Roman knoweth him?" To this I answered that I knew only his name, that he was of a good family (the family, my mother, of M. Scævola Saturninus), and had served with credit in the army.

"May he and his army perish," cried Zadok, "ere they leave the walls of Beth-Harem!"

"In the meanwhile," said Onias, "it were better that the people trouble him not. What is done, let it be done not as to-day."

"Ah! Onias, I see thee; thou wouldst take them by craft; thou wouldst catch them by subtlety."

"I would not catch them at all," Onias replied; "but let them dwell among us in peace. When the time cometh, it will be seen that it is come. I shall trust to see this same Saturninus, and know him."

So we conversed of many things, till Shammai, be-thinking himself of affairs that required his presence, took his departure, Zadok accompanying him. The

elder of the two rulers, Shammai, is one whom for many things both Judith and Onias esteem, while, for other reasons, they think but lightly of him. He is, if one may say so, a sort of Epicurean in a Jew's dress; and among what nation, tribe, or religion, is not the Epicurean to be found? The dispositions which nature hath given him are such as inspire affection; but the boldness with which he administers the office of ruler of the synagogue, while in his heart he doubts or disbelieves the faith of which he makes so open a profession, causeth him to be treated not so much as a friend whom they can admit to their entire confidence and love, as one whose cheerful presence and discourse add greatly to the pleasures of any society of which he makes a part. His years insure him reverence. Judith, indeed, having known him from a child, doth more than reverence him. Of Zadok thou shalt hear another time.

LETTER IX.

THE longer I remain among this people, my mother, the more strange do they seem; but the more, too, do I become bound to them, and especially to the members of this household. They are a people beyond any other religious, and yet, as I suppose, beyond any other superstitious and wicked; which seems to proceed from this, that they make distinctions between the worship of God and virtue, and consider these two things as not necessarily joined together; not but what the same error is to be observed elsewhere, but that here it appears to be more universal. Prayers are made upon all occasions, and in all places, but they are a ceremony by themselves; and being once said, the matter is over; so much was due to God by command, agreement, or custom, or tradition, and the debt has been paid. Then how their life shall be ordered, is another affair; and go-

verned by interests, rules, and motives which belong to itself. Some who are esteemed to stand at the head of the religion, and who generally are of the Pharisees, are as remarkable for their want of goodness, or rather as notorious for their vices, as for their piety toward God, shown in a strict observance of the Sabbath and the least points of the law. So long as religion shall be held as somewhat distinct from virtue, must it continue to be so ; and so long will the faith in one God, in which we may justly boast over all other nations, be little better for the interests of goodness than the Roman's faith in many.

But at the same time is it true, that some have been instructed even as it was my fortune to be by thee. Their religion hath been connected with their life ; their many prayers and fastings, their sacrifices and offerings, their goings up to the feasts, their observance of the law to its smallest requirement in every outward rite and act, has all been done not in the place of virtue, but in addition, and as incentives to it. Of this sort I need hardly say to thee are Onias and Judith. They are careful observers of the law ; but while exact in the mere ceremonial part, they are even more exact in what pertains to righteousness. Nay, they would by many be thought to neglect observances on which others greatly pride themselves, though none can be found to charge them with any infringement of the greater matters of the law. The hypocrisies and over-righteousness of the Pharisees are not theirs, nor the indifference of the Sadducees. They believe in Moses and the prophets—in the law that guides them in this life, and in the resurrection at the last day, for which the law fits them by its commands ; but they pretend not to more than they have. They are content to do what to them seems necessary, without seeking to gain the admiration of others by extraordinary acts of piety, and the observance of all the lesser points of the law. Truly, their lives are beautiful. Onias, indeed, often-

times seems severe and harsh; but he is a just man, and fears God, and serves him in that very way which to him seems right. The law with the traditions, which are its interpretation, are to him the lights—the greater and the lesser—by which he draws every breath, and shapes every step in life. He asks for no more or better; he sees no defect; there is nothing incomplete to be supplied. If the law were truly kept, Israel, he says, would rise to her proper glory, and would overshadow the whole earth—prosperity, and riches, and love, and glory, would make the land of Judea the wonder of the earth, and the seat of an everlasting kingdom, for its felicity, like the paradise of the first pair.

Judith, though her reverence for the law is great, and though she reads diligently the prophets, and observes their precepts, and performs the required rights, is yet secretly sad and unsatisfied. So much have I gathered, not from any set disclosure she hath made of her thoughts, but rather from the language of her countenance, from words that have dropped from her, and yet more from what she hath not said when certain subjects have formed the matter of discourse. With the rest of the people, she is anxiously dwelling on what the future shall reveal, but differing from them; her hopes are of some one who shall prove himself to be a reformer of the manners of her nation, as much and as well as the subduer of her enemies. She thinks that the medicine needed is partly that which shall purge the heart; so that when she speaks of the Messiah, it is as a prophet and a priest that she delights chiefly to regard him. She asks for a teacher and a guide, who shall lead her farther into a knowledge of God and of things invisible than she can now penetrate. The priests of the law do not give her what she asks—the law itself is dark, and refuses to speak of the things of which she desires most to learn. The harp of David, though the music is sweet, and all the tones it speaks find an

accordant response in her soul, yet are not its notes enough to answer one by one to the wants she feels. The harmony is not complete.

For myself, my mother, I judge that this people want liberty first—truth afterwards. The truths for which a soul like Judith's sighs would fall on stony ground, falling upon the hearts of slaves. In the slave, the thoughts are bound as well as the limbs. They cannot think or feel as men who cannot move and act as men. The outward bondage becomes necessarily one that is inward also, seeing the body and the mind are one. Is it not in vain, therefore, to look for any great advantages to come from a prophet who shall not first appear and act in the character of a deliverer and conqueror? So thinks Onias, and so thinks the nation. When the looked-for Messiah shall appear, it is certain, so judges the whole people, that he will appear as one who shall first of all bring deliverance to the captive, and a ransom for such as are under bonds; nor can any signs in heaven or on earth show the approach of the true Shiloh, but such as proclaim him prince and conqueror.

How astonishing the news I hear through thy letters and the common channels of the present ascendancy and power of Sejanus! With any due proportion of humanity and modesty, it is not to be doubted that he might have founded a name and authority that might have overshadowed Tiberius. But surely the gods having now decreed his destruction, have made him mad. Is it possible Romans should endure such remorseless cruelties? What a fate is this of a city and empire like Rome—with an emperor buried in a desert island, old in years and older in crime, feebler through lust and intemperance than through age, the object of universal detestation, yet ruling these many millions with the mere breath of his mouth; and besides him, this second self in Rome carrying on his own schemes of cruelty and ambition, pleasing his great master in proportion to

his excesses, since the iniquity of the satellite serves as a shield for that of the principal. When will the justice of God overtake such wickedness? You are alarmed, my mother, at such language, lest spies and informers should bear it to the secret tribunals of power. Be not afraid. My letters are intrusted to none but known and faithful hands; besides, we are not of the noble Roman families; we are not a mark high enough for the emperor or his tool. Nevertheless, read them in secrecy, with doors and windows closed, and then carefully conceal or destroy them.

The coming to Beth-Harem of C. Sentius Saturninus, my mother, has, both to the inhabitants of the city, and to us of the household of Onias, proved anything rather than an evil. His presence, together with his soldiers, has acted as a wholesome restraint on the licentious rabble and the quarrelsome factions within the walls, keeping or restoring peace where Herod's authority was wont oftentimes to fail; and to us he shows himself well disposed to cultivate our society and friendship, and make himself of service in many ways. When the duties of his office allow him a season of recreation, he seeks the precincts of thy brother's dwelling, and either walking up and down on the banks of the Jordan in company with thy son and niece, sitting under the vine-covered arbour of which I have told thee, or else at the table partaking of the hospitality of Onias, we have enjoyed many hours of agreeable intercourse. He is youthful for the rank he holds, but his great merit in campaigns, both in Germany and the East, have won for him early advancement. The qualities of his heart are as remarkable as those of his intellect; so that even in the army he has been called the good centurion. If rigorous in preserving discipline, he is not unnecessarily severe. His justice may always be relied upon; and when he punishes, it is against the feelings of his nature; he would pardon if it could be done with safety.

It was the last Sabbath that Onias made a supper for Saturninus, at which sat down many guests besides. Shammai, Eliel, Zadok, and Eleazer, rulers, and doctors of the law from Beth-Harem, were also there. The house was bright with the multitude of lamps, and the tables bent beneath the wealth both of the service and of the meats with which it was loaded. Music was added to the entertainment, which came to us, not too loud nor yet too faint, from a neighbouring apartment; and as the feast drew to a close, there were gathered on the grounds before the dwelling other members of the household, the servants, the husbandmen, and all of every other humble office belonging to this great vine-dresser, where, to the sound of the timbrel, pipe, and harp, and by the light of the fading day and the new moon, they joined in dances common to the inhabitants of the country. When we had sat at the tables the usual time, we then resorted to the portico and the rooms overlooking the Jordan, where, for our entertainment, we either watched the movements of the rustic dance, or fell into such discourse as our thoughts were led to by the time and place, and the objects around us.

"Thus it is," said Saturninus to Judith, "that you of Judea keep your day of worship. It is not so with your people, as I think, in Rome."

"So it may seem," said Judith, "because there, by the necessary confinement of a city, our usages are not made visible to every eye as here; and you, I doubt, were never, when in Rome, within the dwelling of a Jew?"

"I must confess," replied the centurion, "I never was; but I can truly affirm that this has not been because of any hostility which I have entertained towards your nation, but simply because chance never threw me into their society."

"I doubt not your word," replied Judith. "If it had been your fortune to have mingled with us in Rome, you would have found, I may presume to say,

mainly the same observances there as here; for we are to a wonder the same people the earth over. How say you, Julian? for your testimony must be beyond dispute."

I said that it was certainly so.

"The stranger, however," observed Saturninus, "conceives of this day as if it were rather a day of fasting and worship alone."

"It is far otherwise," answered Judith. "We worship, indeed, on this day, and we rest from labour, as do also our cattle and servants; but otherwise, it is a day of feasting, not of fasting. It must be the strictness with which labour of every kind is prohibited which hath given origin to the feeling you have expressed. Labour is indeed absolutely forbidden—that is the great end of the appointment. Our merciful law hath taken good care of the humble and the poor in this, that the rich and the great cannot deprive them, nor even the more helpless dumb beast, of this repose. No man, however great in Israel, dares compel the toil, or even permit it, of man, woman, or animal. This, you will allow, is both wise and merciful."

"It is, indeed," replied the Roman. "I wish that in this point at least the law of the Jew were also the law of the Roman and of the world."

"But," continued Judith laughing, "so exacting is our law on this point, that were you, Saturninus, to become one of us, and were so much as to break the law in the least iota, even by bearing your sword or lance from one place to another, we should stone you even to death."

"Alas! then," replied Saturninus, "I can never be a Jew. But I suppose you speak but in jest?"

"Well," said Judith, "we are not so savage or so strict now. If you will become a proselyte, I can promise you an easier yoke. Nay, for that, some of our doctors make it light enough. But that must not be heard by our rulers. Shammai's voice happily

shields us. We need not fear being overheard when he hath the argument."

A loud burst of merriment from the group of dancers before us here for a moment interrupted our conversation. Judith, springing from her seat, and beholding the gaiety of the peasants, their wives, and children, could not be restrained from joining them, but saying that she would return soon, bounded along the portico and down the flight of steps, and in a moment was in the midst of them, the merriest and most agile of all. Such an example being given, I was not slow to do likewise, so that, till we were well wearied with our exertions, we continued to mingle with the dancers and partake their pleasures. The delight which the accession of Judith to their numbers occasioned—whom all of her servants and dependents seem so to love, that her service is their highest pleasure—was very manifest in the increased hilarity with which they engaged in their sport as soon as she became one of them.

When we returned to the portico, Saturninus was seated and conversing with the doctors, whom we also joined. They had been evidently talking of the synagogue, for Saturninus was inquiring of Shammai why the stranger from Enon had that morning been denied the privilege which he sought of speaking to the people, while others were freely allowed.

"Should a man," answered Zadok, before Shammai could find his words, "who is a follower of one that is reported to be rather in the keeping of an evil spirit than of his own, be allowed to speak in the name of the Lord? It is not every one, though he may esteem himself wise and as one of the elders, whom we are ready to take at his own word. It was not hard to guess with what new insolence he would have entertained our ears."

"Nevertheless," said Eleazer, "I would gladly have heard what it was he was so swollen with. His own mouth, I doubt not, would have condemned him more than any reproof of ours."

"So, without doubt, it might have been," interrupted the bitter voice of Zadok, "but so it might not have been; and had the bag of wind once found vent, who can tell what blasphemies would have flowed abroad to seduce and deceive and pollute the hearer? What John hath done, he would have striven to do."

"His mouth was well stopped," said the other.

"Ay," said Eliel, "it was, for the people would have heard him gladly."

"I should not marvel if on the next Sabbath," said Eleazer, "they clamoured more still to hear him."

"Let them clamour," replied Zadok; "they are neither rulers nor doctors, nor will all their uproar make them so. There are the streets and the highways—let him use them, and none will hinder. Ere the next Sabbath, it were no wonder if the half-witted populace of Beth-Harem took him for the Christ himself, as I hear in the region of Genessareth they begin to do his master."

"So it is indeed reported, as I learn," said Eleazer; "but it is reported also that he says plainly he is not the Christ."

"He saith it to-day, mayhap," rejoined Zadok; "but let the folly of the people in those parts increase, as it is the nature of folly to do, and carry greater crowds than now to his baptism, and we shall see what his meekness will do. His sordid attire, his fastings and prayers, are the gins and snares to catch fools; and when the multitude of them hath sufficiently grown, he will have cheated himself, as well as them, into an opinion of his own greatness he did not at first entertain. Fools make fools."

"It were well, methinks," said Shammai, "if there were not so many others to set gins and snares of the same sort to cheat those whose sight is small. If John catches the people in that way, he is not the first who, by fastings and long prayers, has gotten a

good opinion among the people, which, if they could have seen behind the veil of his prayers into his deeds, might not have retained its fragrant odour."

It was easy to see at whom Shammai shot his shaft, for Zadok's brow grew darker, and his lips drew back from his long teeth as he said, "It is no crime to observe the law of Moses, even to a tything of mint and cummin, that I have ever heard. The blessing of Jehovah is upon such. The law is the law, and it is not kept except it be kept."

"Most true, rabbi," said Shammai. "In respect of the rites of the law, they are delivered with exactness, and are kept but in one manner. In respect of other things, we have choice. They are not so weighty. In them justice may be put by for a time; so did David. The Jew who should strive to be more than he, surely would seek to be righteous overmuch."

Zadok stroked his beard, but answered not.

"But if that be truth," continued Shammai, "which we have lately heard, the world will not long be afflicted with either the wisdom or the folly of this madman, if he be indeed a madman."

"What is it? what is it?" said Zadok, reviving.

"Why this," said the ruler; "that he is thrusting himself into Herod's affairs, which is much as if he leaped into a lion's den."

"That is news indeed!" replied the other. "Ha, ha! I had not heard it. But what is it he hath done? Let us hear."

"Behold now," said Shammai, "how this learned doctor scenteth evil afar off, and snuffeth up the odour thereof as of a pleasant sacrifice. It were a charity to his soul not to answer him. Why is the heart made to delight in misfortunes of others, and vent curses on them? The Jew by his nature, young Roman, curses thee and all thy people."

"As I judge," replied Saturninus, "it is the Jew that curses, and not the man who lives under the Jew. A Jew infant reared in Rome would not speak such

curses. It is your law that shuts your hearts against the love of others. Nature has no such tuition."

"No, Saturninus," quickly interrupted Judith, "it is not our law, so much as the traditions, which have supplanted it. True it is, our people were made the instrument to destroy impure and idolatrous tribes, and have been instructed not to mix with any nations worshippers of many gods; but this was, that a purer religion might be preserved among one people at least, that should be a pattern to the rest of mankind. The Jewish is the only people who cleave to one God, without image or picture through which to adore him, or by which to conceive of him."

"What is it he hath done, Shammai?" said Zadok with impatience; "what is it he hath done? let us know."

"That is true," rejoined Saturninus. "But it has availed little to mankind that you have held a better faith, while a spirit so hostile towards others hath prevailed; for men are little inclined to copy those whom they hate, or by whom they are hated."

"Doubtless that is so," said Onias; "but the truth hath been too great to be wholly destroyed in that way. Just as the sun shines through dark clouds and thick mists, so hath this truth shone through all our errors, vices, and wickedness, and cast some light upon those who were sitting in darkness. We have hindered it much, but not altogether. Our commerce, and even our wars, have served to carry it abroad."

"Yea," said Shammai, "that is so; but after all that hath been done for us, and in spite of the law and our worship, the Jewish world is but as any other. Jerusalem smells not sweeter, I fear me, to the Lord, than Rome or Alexandria."

"The man is mad," quoth Zadok, "and speaketh blasphemy. Verily, Shammai, it were a righteous act to cast thee out of the synagogue."

"Then," said the ruler, "would there be at length

a chance of my amendment. A man is rarely better than his companions."

"Hear him!" said Zadok; "hear his railings! But cease now, and let it be known what thou hast heard of John."

"It is this only—that he raves madly against Herod for what he is reported to purpose concerning Philip's wife. The king, trusting to have ended his iniquity in peace ere it got much abroad, is now as mad as he."

"Ah! that is good," cried Zadok. "Now we shall see what a prophet can do against a king. Now we shall see how this tanner from Enon will bear himself on the Sabbath."

"Nay, they may claim thus much at our hand," said Shammai, "both John and his disciples, that they are bold and fear no one—and that is a prophet's mark."

"Now," cried Zadok, "let us sing hosannas! Shammai holds John to be a prophet! Let us report it in Beth-Harem—Shammai, the learned doctor and ruler of the synagogue, that stands between the market and the citadel, and which once heard the voice of great Hillel; Shammai, the Hebrew, the Greek, the philosopher, follows after John of Hebron with an uncombed beard, unwashed hands, a beggar's robe, and a leathern girdle about his loins——"

"The grinding of millstones," cried Shammai, interrupting the hoarse sound, "the braying of asses, the shrieking of the wind among the dry cedars of the Dead Sea, the creaking of the wine press, are not to be named, Zadok, with the shrill trumpet of thy voice. Thou needest not repeat thy proclamation, for it has already been heard beyond the walls of Beth-Harem."

With these sayings, partly in jest, and, as it seemed to me, partly in earnest, these learned scribes and rulers took their departure, and returned to the city. When they were gone, it being still early, and the

sounds of the dancers and their music being over, we continued sitting and conversing.

"These priests and rulers," said Saturninus, "take life lightly, if one may judge them by their words. They seem each as if two persons, the one light, and sportful, and open, the other standing back, close, secret, and dark. They appeared not to utter their true thoughts, but to be playing with the subjects that came up."

"It is partly so, indeed," said Judith, "as perhaps with all of us, at least with very many of us; we are one thing to the eye, one thing on the surface, but another quite to him who hath sight to see beyond, and wit to draw up what is there in the greater depths. Sometimes the outer clothing is the fairer and better, but often it covers over a worthier thing than itself, and conceals it from all but those gifted with a sharper and more penetrating vision."

"Yet," continued Saturninus, "in one thing they seemed to agree, in showing dislike of the prophet, who is said to have risen up, and to have commenced the labours of a reformer. But why should one be feared who comes only as a teacher of virtue?"

"The rulers dislike and oppose him," said Onias, "not because he is a prophet, if indeed he be one, but because he is not more of one. The common people, as you may have been told, crowd his steps and hear him gladly: they are caught with every one who sets up a pretension like this."

"But," said the Roman, "even if he were no more than a reformer of the morals of a people, were I a Jew, I should receive him gladly. It were a happy day for Rome, could some one arise whom the gods should fill with a spirit and a power to waken her from her slumbers of death. There are many there, whose prayer to the gods is, morning and evening, at home and in the temples, for more knowledge and light; for the darkness now is one that may be felt. The people still worship the ancient gods, with faith in them more or

less ; but the learned and the thoughtful ask for a better religion than their ancestors have bequeathed, ere they can give it their belief and their obedience. We are buried in mysterious gloom. We grope as blind men, not knowing whence we come, nor whither we go. We have an instinct, which teaches the reality of some Cause equal to the production of this broad world, and the overhanging sun and stars. But we know him not ; we know not how to conceive of him, nor in what manner, with most acceptance, to approach him, save that here also our instincts serve us somewhat, but guide each one a different way. What we mean by virtue, we are persuaded with some general conviction, must be the most pleasing offering we can bring to the altar of the Supreme God ; but we know not in what proportion we should bring him that offering, or others of prayers, sacrifices, garlands, and music ; moreover, we cannot tell how to think of our life, what it is, and when to terminate ; of death, what it is, and to what with certainty it bears us : so that we of Rome long for nothing more than for a teacher and reformer, who should by his genius exercise authority over the minds of men, and by divine inspirations pour into them the light of truth. I would give an ear even to one of not more promise than this wanderer in the wildernesses of Jordan, seeing that, perchance, he may be filled with a divine spirit—for it would appear that we are not able of ourselves, who see so little way, to say in what manner and with what appearances a messenger from God would approach us.”

“It is to me,” said Judith, “a pleasure to hear such opinions. Dwelling, even as I do, under a religious law, which hath the true God for its author, even I desire a knowledge superior to that which now, as a people, we possess. And with many, with multitudes in our unhappy country, I wait for the redemption of Israel, for a new comforting of the people of God. And with certainty do we look for a teacher, who

shall complete and perfect the law now given to us, and establish us in a condition of virtue and happiness, as well as of outward glory, we now cannot so much as dream of. Night and day, day and night, do prayers go up from this whole people, from the sinner as well as the saint, from the child on its mother's knee as well as from him who is standing on the borders of his grave, that God would please to cause a new day to rise upon us, and his kingdom to come and be established in the midst of us. I cannot, then, but look with expectation toward every one who approaches and gives any signs that God is with him. What to think of John I know not, nor do others, as it would seem. The common people, who in some things see clearest—would not God endow them with a sense to know his messenger when he should come?—follow after him, as we hear, daily in increasing numbers, and by baptism are enrolled among his disciples. Would he were in this region, that I might hear for myself, and judge for myself."

"My dear child," said Onias, "think not of John, nor of any great thing as to come of him. He is nought, stark nought. I, too, at first looked toward him with expectation, or rather with a wondering curiosity; but God is not with him. He, too, is a deceiver, or deceived, like so many who have gone before him. In the early days of thy mother Eunice, all Judea was stirred from its lowest depths, yet it proved in the end but a delusion of Satan."

"Of whom and of what speak you?" I asked.

"Doubtless the knowledge of what I would speak of never reached thy ears, for it was before thou sawest the light. I speak of the child born at Bethlehem."

"Not even a rumour," said I, "hath ever reached me."

"It fell out in the latter part of the reign of the great Herod. I even was but a child."

"Herod I know; and of him heard much at Cæsarea; but not of what you now name."

“Surely,” said Judith, “have I heard from my mother, in my youth, tales of the wonderful child born at Nazareth or Bethlehem—born, too, I remember me, in the stable of an inn, whom kings came and worshipped. The rest is gone from me, or has mixed itself with a thousand such tales from the far East.”

“In Jerusalem and all the neighbouring parts,” said Onias, “as indeed throughout Judea, have fables—some with portions of truth intermingled—passed from mouth to mouth. I then, as I have said, was but a child, yet did many things fall upon my ear, which sank in, and have not since departed. But I rather speak of what afterwards came to my knowledge. All Jerusalem was at that time in great expectation of the immediate appearing of the Messiah, and ready to convert anything beyond the facts of every day into a wonder. Among a thousand rumours, no one knew what to believe, and the events since that day have shown that there was nothing to be believed. But the stories handed down assert the birth of a child, as thou hast said, Judith, in the stable of an inn of Bethlehem—whose parents were strangers of Nazareth in Galilee—and whose birth was declared to some shepherds in the neighbourhood of the town by a vision of angels. As I think, and as many thought then, what those peasants saw was in their dream. Yet so confidently was the vision reported, and, beside that, the appearance of a bright star pointing to the very spot where the child lay, that many believed, and it came to be a rumour throughout the city and all the parts round about, that he who was to be King of the Jews was at last born. This coming soon, as it could hardly fail to do, to the ears of Herod, alarmed him not a little; for it was not unknown to him, that the people were constantly looking when this future king should come and assume his throne: nay, there were not wanting flatterers, who persuaded Herod that he himself was the looked for Messiah. But he believed them not.

Yet not being ready to surrender his power into the hands of any other, and fearing lest there might be some truth in the tales which were passing from one to another, and filled the city, he, according to his nature, determined upon a cruel measure for allaying his apprehensions; for he gave sudden and secret orders for all the children in Bethlehem to be seized and slaughtered, that so the new-born king might perish with them. Yet the order was not so secretly given, but that a warning came to many in season, who escaped the intended destruction. Among them, it was affirmed by some, was the young child, though by others it was asserted that it had perished. But since, it has been well known that they fled—the parents and the child—to their native place, where they have dwelt, he who was to be a king quite forgetting his high dignity, living and labouring humbly enough, subject to his father as a carpenter; wherefore the wonders related of his birth are thus shown to be delusions or worse. The only thing we know to have been real was the destruction of innocent children by the king, of which the parents of the child were the cause, either by their own acts and delusions, or the delusions and acts of others, which they could not prevent. Their own safety they effected, but left behind others miserably to perish through their means.”

“This is a strange story,” said I.

“Not so strange to us,” replied Onias, “who are ever greedy of what is marvellous, and who dwell on the borders of the land of fables.”

“Who,” asked Judith, “were these people from Nazareth, that they should pretend to the glory of being parents of the Messiah? Is it not our belief, that he shall come of the house of David? Surely their lineage might be traced.”

“So much was true,” replied Onias. “It was found that they were, in truth, of that family, though poor and unknown.”

"What, father, was the name they bore?" asked Judith.

"I have forgotten," answered Onias; "nor do I remember that of the child; though, among other feigned things, it was sent abroad that an angel had announced the name by which it should be called."

"Were there many who gave their faith to such pretences?" I asked.

"It cannot be denied," said Onias, "that very many believed, and more waited in hope to see what might come of it. But the more wise and prudent saw not, in any of the things affirmed, the signs that should fitly announce the Messiah of Judea. Especially was it clear, that he upon whose shoulders was to rest the government of Israel and of the world, would not first breathe in the feeding trough of a camel. It is not so kings are born, much less the King of kings. How should the people of God know their sovereign in such a form, and how should they be guilty, should they reject or destroy him? After a time, no more was heard of this wonder of Bethlehem; and by the generations of to-day, it is forgotten that such events have been."

"So you will have us to believe," I said, "will it be with this John of Hebron?"

"That," Onias replied, "is what I would say. The signs of Judea's deliverer are not more in this baptising wanderer of the wilderness than they were in that peasant's child. And when the people have run after him, and fed their foolish hopes on chaff, they will return to themselves, and wait. Many times have our hopes been cast down, and they will be again, if in our folly we fasten them on this new preacher. A good man he may be, but no more. He who is to come hath not yet come; nevertheless he may not be far off, but standing in the midst of us, while our eyes see him not. John, indeed, speaks of one to follow him; but neither is it he."

Saying this, Onias rose and withdrew.

When he was gone, Judith said, "My father will not believe until such a one appears as he looketh for, and John is far from that. But so I, Julian, cannot judge. Are we to say how a messenger of God shall manifest himself to men, or what form, whether that of a servant or a king, his Messiah shall take? Alas! for me a king were a small gift indeed. What to me were it if David again came forth from the grave, or his greater son, or any of the prophets, and erected here in Judea the throne which so many are impatient to behold? Of what avail were such an one to me? My soul—and, Julian, I am not alone—hungers for somewhat more nutritious, that can feed and support a higher life than that of the body—for an entertainment richer and more divine than could ever be had in a king's palace. We have kings now, and courts of luxury; I could resort to Herod, or Pilate, or Philip, but what should I find there that I want?"

"But, dear Judith," said I, "do you not now, in saying this, yourself commit the error which you have just noted in Onias? He turns away from this wild man of the wilderness, this son of thunder, this unlettered and humble child of nature, this stern preacher of righteousness, because he does not agree with the picture he has formed in his mind of the prophet whom God will send, when he sends forth his Messiah; and do not you also make your own thought the measure of what God shall do, when you refuse your homage to a king? Yet surely, when the prophets speak of him who is to come, it is of one who is to govern Israel, and rule over the kingdom of David—it is ever of the Christ as King."

"Yes, Julian," she replied, "without doubt I have condemned myself; I am wrong; I should have no judgment in matters too high for the reach of our poor thoughts; and yet how can one, who feels the darkness within, cease to conjecture and hope, and look forward for that which the heart, as God hath

made it, pants for as the spent hart for the water-brooks? But surely our wisdom is, as our office, to wait for the signs in patience of the soul, which shall give us assurance of the prophet of God whenever he shall appear. To you, Saturninus, these opinions, I suppose, are strange and new?"

"Not so," replied the centurion; "I have been long in Judea, and the faith and the hopes of her people are already familiar to my ear and my mind. I have heard much of that of which you have now spoken, and ever listen with satisfaction to any who converse of such things, as thereby I become more exact in my knowledge of the forms of religious faith which prevail among your people; and it has ever been the thoughts of men concerning their religious observances and doctrines, that have possessed for me the highest power of attraction. As I enter the precincts of the dwelling of a new people, it is the first investigation with me, what is their belief of the gods? or have they none? or do they worship the forms of nature, and the instruments of her power? Among you of Judea have I alone found thoughts of God worthy of the mind to entertain concerning that being whom no mind can ever understand; I mean among the common people, and the whole people; for among us, philosophers have long held, and do now hold, opinions on such things hardly less worthy to be revered than such as are to be found in your sacred books; but with you, adequate thoughts and conceptions of the Divinity are a universal inheritance."

"So," said Judith, "they may seem to you, when you place them by the side of opinions held by the Roman populace. But so they seem not to me, and to many of our tribe who wait for the coming of the Just One. Our doctors and priests by their traditions—by which they have changed the law delivered by Moses, and in its place thrust their own figments, under which they escape from the obligations of a true piety, and in its stead offer to God and man the

dead sacrifice of a ceremonial exactness—have corrupted not only our religion, but the very hearts of the people; and with truth doubtless it may be affirmed, that beneath the fair and painted show we make of faith and love, there is hid unbelief, hatred, malice, and all uncleanness. The visible and apparent goodness is as a treacherous covering of verdure and flowers over dead men's graves, through which he who treads thereon falls into depths of foul corruption that the mind dares not contemplate. Of your Roman people there must be more hope than of us, we having perverted and thrust from us a higher truth. I wait with hope to hear good things yet of John. As yet, all that we learn is as nothing. We hear to-day, by such as have come from farther up the river, that he declares himself to be but the herald of one greater than himself, but who that greater is, or who himself is, only darkly hints."

"So," said I, "Ziba hath reported to me, receiving it from those who deal in news at Beth-Harem. The people, he says, are greatly moved with curiosity, many having gone up towards Galilee in the desire to see him. They were not a little enraged that the rulers gave not to his disciple, the tanner of Enon, the liberty to declare himself; but in private dwellings they have heard him, and even on the steps of the market-place. They intend that on the next Sabbath his voice shall be heard in the synagogue, if any power of theirs can bring it to pass."

"The heart of our people, properly so called, Saturninus," said Judith, "is better than that of their guides and masters, our proud counsellors and doctors. Among our sequestered valleys, away from corrupt cities, they are still in some sort a pure and simple tribe, believers in the spirit of our law, as well as formal observers of the letter. Were a prophet indeed to arise, it is from them I should look for a just judgment concerning him, rather than from their masters, the Pharisees and doctors."

The moon now sinking below the horizon, and the inhabitants of the house having withdrawn from their amusement, the centurion bade us farewell, and turned towards the gates of Beth-Harem.

It is not difficult to see, my mother, with what attractive power Judith acts upon Saturninus. He can neither hear other persons nor see other objects while she is near; nor is it wonderful, for it is the same with all who approach her. But it would, methinks, amuse the dark Pilate, were it made known to him, that he whom he sent into these regions to observe and control an enemy, is already, as it were, become the friend and associate of his household. He may, indeed, know this, and suppose that his spy has but so much the nearer access for his observations; and it would be so were Saturninus capable of playing two parts; but of that no one who had ever looked upon his countenance, in which are written, in characters that cannot deceive, honesty and truth, could believe him guilty. He comes to the dwelling of thy brother as a friend, and will do none other than the offices and acts of a friend; and truly in this manner does he gain most successfully the ends of his sojourn in Beth-Harem; for no one could so secure the adherence and quiet of Beth-Harem and its suburbs, as by showing himself the friend and companion of Onias. But as friendly as he is towards Onias, so is he to the inhabitants of the city, and especially to the more religious among them. He has already conferred many acts of favour upon the synagogue.

LETTER X.

THE beauty of this region, my mother, which lies on the shores of the Jordan, would delight your eye, which so loves to dwell on the works of nature. If Tivoli, and the Alban hills, the base of Soracte, the sea-views of Baiæ and Naples, draw you so often from

the heated walls of Rome, and send you back again so much happier and better, as you do ever affirm, not less would this Jewish world minister to both mind and body, to the eye loving beauty alone, and to the soul seeking God in beauty as in all things. Indeed to thy spirit, which ever seems half caught away from earth by its familiar musings upon the future and unseen, this land would supply a nourishment others never can. Even I have come to perceive and feel the difference. It is like no other spot of earth. The mind thinks of the many times through so many centuries that the Spirit of the universe, the infinite and incomprehensible Energy on which all depend—while from other nations he hath hidden himself in a silence and darkness never violated—hath here made himself visible, hath here conversed with man, and taught and guided him as a child, that through one people so instructed truth might be then spread abroad in the world; and thinking thus, a dread falls upon it in the midst of the scenes where such things have been, which, though it awes the soul, yet strangely adds to the pleasure with which it gazes and contemplates. The very leaves of the trees, as they tremble on their branches, seem shaken by the invisible God; the dark woods and the silent grotto are here entered with a hesitating step, as if there especially would be felt his presence. On the banks of the sacred Jordan the ear hears him in the murmuring of its waters; and over the face of the whole land, and in the overhanging air, there seems brooding the spirit of Him who hath, indeed, made all, and is the father of all, but is in a nearer sense, as the past hath proved, the father and protector of this people, and may at any moment, and in any place, again make himself suddenly to be seen, and heard, and felt. Now, especially, are all looking and waiting for the place and the hour when he shall shine forth, and put in some soul his mind and his power, and establish his kingdom, as of old, in the sight of all men. Every rumour

of what is strange is caught up and magnified ; and wherever it goes, finds those full of feverish expectations who are prompt to believe. Is this feeling that holds all alike, the high and the low, the slave and the lord, the Pharisee, the Sadducee, and the Herodian, the mother and the child, the sound and diseased of mind, the whole and the possessed, the Samaritan as well as the Jew—is this a delusion ? or is it indeed stirred up within us by the visitings of God himself, as a preparation for that which is to be soon unfolded ? Oh ! my mother, who can doubt that hath dwelt upon the writings of our Scriptures, as I have lately done, whether it be of a divine origin this general moving and heaving of the common mind ? The time spoken of by the prophets hath come, and as they are true, must the kingdom of God quickly appear ; and of a surety, if ever this people is to be saved, it must be now ; if ever they are to be snatched from the jaws of the devourer, it must be now, ere they are quite swallowed up. A little while, and they will be dissolved, and lost in the mighty mass of the leviathan, whose teeth are now gnashing upon them ready to destroy.

Concerning this I have now at length somewhat of moment to say unto thee. But let it come in its order.

It was on the first day of the week, the day following that on which Saturninus supped with Onias, that as I sat reading—not as in Rome, Ennius, or Virgil, or Seneca, but the prophets—Judith, with steps light as a falling leaf, drew near and wished to converse. For Judith I was ready, alas ! how ready, to close even the prophets. I saw at once that some trouble had come into her clear spirit to stir and cloud its depths. “What is it ?” said I, as she placed herself at my side ; “your eye is often sad, but never troubled as now, Of what wouldst thou speak ?”

“Of my father, Julian ; of Onias.”

“And what of Onias ?” said I with alarm ; “is it not well with him ?”

"Yes, it is well with him," she replied, "and yet is he sick. He is not as he used to be ; he is silent ; he hears not what is spoken ; by night he wakes, and dreams by day. Then, as thou knowest, he leaves the harvest and the care of his fields, where once was all his delight, for the company of those in Beth-Harem, whom formerly he knew not, for those long visits to Machærus, and journeys to and fro over Judea. I know not what it all portends."

"Confides he not in thee, Judith?"

"Alas ! not in all things. My mother, as I have heard, shared not only his love, but his trust also. Me, though he loves as fondly as father, methinks, ever did, yet doth he still deem a child to be loved indeed, but not wholly trusted."

"But to me, Judith, will he intrust less of himself than to thee ; I am a stranger in comparison of thee. He has spoken to me only of things common to all. On our journey hither, indeed, he talked more largely, but since, he has been closer to me than even to thee."

Yet," said Judith, "do I guess from the looks which from time to time he fixes on you, that to you he will ere long impart that, whatever it may be, which causes his anxiety. But I would that, before that, nay, at once, you might tear his secret from him, and so either deliver him from his yoke, or, if it be worthy, share it with him, laying on me also an equal weight."

"Do you not," said I, "even so much as surmise what it is that hath so possessed him?"

"I cannot, Julian, but think I do ; yet may God grant it to be an error. I know nothing ; but as thou sayest, I surmise. I fear, then, that Onias plans a rising in Israel. Since my memory can tell of anything, it tells of nothing with such clearness and strength as of Onias's worship of the names and deeds of the Maccabees, and of Judas of Galilee. In the morning and the evening prayer these are the names,

even with that of the great God, first fixed in my mind. The petition that God would grant salvation to his people in these times by some arm like theirs, to which he would give his own strength, has been with him the first and the last, the alpha and omega of his prayers ; and when the oppressions of Judea have been named, he has been ever wont to pour forth, with even a prophet's force, the wrath that has burned within him, so that our quiet vales have echoed far and near to the tones of his voice ; when so roused, the voice of a tempest."

"I shall never forget it," said I. "In the streets of Cæsarea it towered over all the crash of the falling temple, the noise of the battle, and the braying of the trumpets."

"What I would say," continued Judith, "is, that of late all this hath ceased. While his heart seems to burn hot within him, and the eye, starting and suspicious, shows that all is awake there, he speaks not of his old themes ; and when of anything, of my veil, perhaps my sandal, or some idle household care. Then messengers arrive and depart in the silence of the night, and Onias ofttimes himself joins them ; while upon me, though not indeed by words, but otherwise more strictly, is enjoined silence and secrecy."

"I cannot, my cousin, like you, compare Onias with himself at different times, nor note the signs which to-day make him to be unlike what he has been before ; but neither can I doubt the truth of your conjectures. But, Judith, there is not within the compass of the hills and valleys of Judea, from the mountains of Lebanon to those of Idumea, a man for wisdom and power like Onias. If he be indeed laying, as he thinks, the foundation of a new Israel, he is a workman of whom we need not be ashamed, and who will put the top stone over where he has laid the foundation for it. What he begins he will end."

Judith drew back with pain and distress in her countenance as I said these words.

"Oh, Julian, and do you then think that such is to be the salvation of Israel? That the saviour of our country is to be one whose garments shall be rolled in blood, his footsteps marked by the slaughter of embattled hosts, the devastation of cities and villages, and whose aim shall only be conquest and dominion? It may be so; so our people will think it to be; but for me, my heart, blindly perhaps, cries out against it. Though Onias should grow to be king of all Israel, with Rome at his feet, 'twould bring no joy to me. At Cæsarea surely, if I have heard you aright, you withstood the madness of Philip and Anna?"

"I did indeed," I answered; "but I might not therefore, dear Judith, the enterprise of Onias. Philip was one, Onias is another. A rising in Israel—that was but the rising of an Israelite, as in Cæsarea—I would now, as then, oppose as useless waste of life and strength, though not as of itself to be held guilty. The slave may always turn on his enslaver, and plead God and the right; but when Israel—Israel through all her tribes—is roused, and rises in her ancient might, then, Judith, I shall be of her side, and my life, little as it may be, and with it all my wealth, shall be cast a bubble on the tide of war to bide the issue. And certain as we may find it to be that Onias is laying the plans which you surmise, so certain is it that that is on foot, to which it will behove every son of Abraham to lend his heart and hand, from which none but a traitor to his country can turn away. It will be no affair of Cæsarea or Beth-Harem, but of Israel in all her borders."

Judith was silent. I saw that her disappointment was great at finding in me so prompt a defender of the cause which she believed her father was engaged in originating or promoting.

She could not conceal her grief.

"But if," she again resumed, "the purposes of Onias, and the enterprise he hath taken in hand be, as in the case of Cæsarea, one narrow and confined—"

"Then," I rejoined, "may you depend upon Julian taking the same part now as before."

"Let me hope," she said, "that it will be so."

Saying these things, she returned with a step less light and quick to her apartments.

Many things have served to convince me that Judith's conjectures are not without some good foundation. I, too, have noted in the manner of Onias, when present, and the manner of his absence, that which hath put me upon considering the probable causes of what appeared to me a conduct too unusual and singular to be the effect of mere accident, or a momentary humour. But what I had reached only through much reasoning, and bringing into one connexion things apparently diverse and remote, and was then, after all, an obscure and doubtful conclusion, was soon made certain and clear, and placed beyond question, by the communication of Onias himself. By no means was I prepared for all that he unfolded, when, soon after Judith had left me, as I was walking slowly toward Beth-Harem by the early twilight, he overtook me and began to converse. When we had talked for a space of such things as first offered themselves, and had advanced a little on the road, we came to a well which lies half way between the house of Onias and the gate of the city, whither the inhabitants often resort, that they may refresh themselves on the spot with its cooler waters, and bear them in pitchers and skins to their houses. Trees on every side shield it from the rays of the sun, save where the highway passes it in a straight course to the city, whose gates, seen at a distance, seem to be a wall to prevent the further passage of the traveller. All around among the trees are seats rudely constructed of rocks, nearly in the shape in which nature left them, but which, covered with moss or leaves that have grown up and spread over them, afford an agreeable resting-place to the weary pilgrim as he arrives thus far on his journey, or to those who seek them for the

cool air, or water, and as a relief from the noise and dust of Beth-Harem. Here Onias led me; and here we sat by the well side about the tenth hour. He seemed like one who wishes, yet fears to speak; and while he fears and doubts, first discourses of many things about which he cares not.

"It was not far from here," he said, "that we first saw the Roman Saturninus as he advanced towards Beth-Harem."

"It was but a few paces distant," I said.

"Saturninus," he resumed musingly, "is a good man. He is a Roman, a sinner of the Gentiles, but he is a good man. Moreover, he loves our nation, and already hath conferred many favours on our synagogue."

"He seems to me," I replied, "to be one to whom it is natural to do well; and for whom it matters little whether he believes in the gods of Rome or the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He hath that ready for which alone we need a knowledge of the truth—virtue; and it is enough."

"For this world," said Onias. "But how shall he have a part in the resurrection, except he be a son of Abraham? The promises of Jehovah are to no others. Nevertheless, he is a good man; and it were a pity evil befell him in this world or the world to come."

"As for the world to come," said I, "I am willing to leave him to the compassions of God, which are more than man's. In Zadok's hands he would fare ill, nor would I readily trust him to Eleazer. It is well for man that in the judgment day a being of larger mercy than his holds the balance in which sin is weighed."

"May I be delivered from the judgment of man," said Onias, "for his mercies are cruel; nor would I that Saturninus suffer therefrom."

"Why should he fear, or shouldst thou fear for him?" I asked.

"Julian," said thy brother, "he and his men are as

those who once stood upon the plain by the Salt Sea ; the earth is on fire beneath them, and is ready to part asunder and swallow them up. At a moment when they look not for it, yea, when they are in security—at the feast, it may be, or the dance—sudden destruction may overtake them.”

Hardly doubting what the thought was in thy brother's mind, I yet asked him of what he spake, and whence the danger to Saturninus. As he was about to reply, the form of one walking towards the city drew nigh, and pausing at the well, then approached us where we sat, and surveying us a moment, gave the salute of peace to Onias. The obscurity of the air did not allow us to discern who it was, especially as he was much wrapped about in his garment, for the evening was cool ; but no sooner had he spoken than we knew the voice of Zadok. I was vexed that we were so interrupted ; but Onias seemed, on the other hand, glad that the ruler was come, and acceded readily to his request, that we would pass the gates and enter his dwelling, which was just within them. We accordingly rose from our seat, and accompanied him to the city. We were soon once more at our ease beneath the roof of the rabbi, who gave us hospitable entertainment. Onias soon returned to what we had been conversing of.

“You ask,” said he, “of what danger I spake. Julian, Zadok is of our side.”

“Ay,” said the rabbi, “that am I. Say on ; fear me not.”

“Of part at least of what I would say,” continued Onias, “I doubt not, Julian, thou more than surmisest that there is to be a rising in Israel?”

I said that so much I could not but gather from what he had said at different times, and from what I had observed.

“Yes,” said Onias, “the hour has come when once more Judea shall own her king ! The time for her redemption hath drawn nigh ! and but that in

Cæsarea the tumult that happened there threw a hindrance in our way, the hour ere this had fully come. A secret league, invisible to all eyes save those whom it concerns, binds together all parts of our land to our enterprise. In Galilee, in Samaria, in Peræa, in Judea, in Idumea, are there those who stand ready and waiting, their hands upon their swords, and their loins girded—a multitude that no man can number. Who is he in whose veins runs the blood of a true Israelite, that will refuse to join himself to such a company—to those who, though they should themselves perish, shall purchase redemption for Israel; shall be the sacrifice with which the Lord shall be well pleased; shall lay the first stones of the foundations of that kingdom of our God that shall be everlasting. It is not thou, Julian, of the house of Alexander, who will draw back. Since I saw thee in the fight in Cæsarea, I knew thee to be an Israelite indeed; and what I have heard since from thee, hath persuaded me that on thee one may rely as a staff that shall not bend nor break.”

I then was about to say what I had but just before declared to Judith, concerning the extent in which the whole people were engaged in the present enterprise; but Onias interrupted me.

“I know what thou wouldst say; fear not. This is not, Julian, a revolt on the part of Onias the vine-dresser, nor on the part of Beth-Harem and the country round about, nor on the part of the inhabitants of Peræa alone; it is not one against a thousand, nor a thousand against the innumerable hosts of Rome; but it is, or it shall be, Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, who shall rise as one man against the oppressor! If, with their handful among the rocks and the hills, Matathias and Judas overcame the great Antiochus, and wrought out deliverance for Israel, how shall it be but that when the same Israel comes up, with all her hosts mustered and arrayed, and the Lord and his anointed to lead them on, we shall again triumph,

and more than triumph, over the uncircumcised, and upon the necks of those who have been our rulers, set our feet as kings and conquerors? Julian," continued thy brother with a voice low and mysterious, "to the ears of one who is worthy to hear so glad tidings I say it—we have found the Messiah!"

"Ay," said Zadok, "we have found the Messiah!"

"And it is he," continued Onias, "who shall lead the hosts of Israel."

"Yea," said Zadok, "it is under our king we shall fight."

"What mean you?" I asked: "what and whom mean you? This prophet on the banks of the Jordan?"

"A man possessed of a devil?" cried Zadok.

"What mark," said Onias, "do we behold in John of him who is to redeem Israel? What is he but a wandering beggar, if, indeed, he be not, as Zadok saith, in the possession of a devil? So in truth affirm—and who should discern in such things clearer than they—Pharez the diviner, and Uzzi the exorcist. Is he such a one as the people are looking for, and such a one as the prophets have foretold? In Herod, Julian, in the tetrarch of Galilee, do we behold our future king."

Neither was I wholly unprepared for this disclosure. Onias had more than once hinted his belief, and his frequent intercourse with Herod at Machærus had confirmed my suspicions. But though for myself I was ready to give due honour to Herod as a king, I was not ready to own him as the great and expected Prince; and so at once I said to Onias.

He heard me, and replied, "Be not in haste to reject him ere you have known and seen him. As there were not wanting those who in former days believed the great Herod to be the sent of God, so there are not wanting a greater number who, for better reasons, put their faith in his son. If it be the office of the anointed of God to be the saviour of

his country, to drive from her borders the Gentile, to raise Jerusalem from where she sits in sackcloth and ashes to her ancient pinnacle of renown, to exalt the law in the eyes of all nations, and establish it, and bring under its dominion all the nations of the earth; and if now, as all our wise men affirm, and the Scriptures declare, the set time is come, and the times of the prophecies are fulfilled, where shall we look but to Herod? where are the signs for which we seek but in him? He is already a prince, powerful and wise; his brother of Iturea is also a prince, of power hardly less; and in Jerusalem dwells Philip, who holds no small sway over the hearts of the people of that great capital. Moreover, an inward voice persuadeth Herod that he is the man, and they who are wise in a knowledge of things hidden to common eyes, announce him such—diviners and soothsayers, they are of one and the same mind.”

“Yea,” said Zadok, “it is so. Pharez and Uzzi both hail him king.”

“If Herod be not he, where shall we find him?” continued Onias; “it is now, or it is never. The prophets say now, yet I say again, where is he? Who will show him to us? If Herod be not he, we may again lie down in despair, for there is no other. Over the whole face of Judea the eye beholds no other, and the days are fulfilled.”

“And who,” I asked, “believe in him?”

“There are those scattered throughout all the borders of the land,” he replied, “who are believers, and who stand with their hands on their swords, prompt to act when he shall declare himself. The Herodians, save a few, are with him. No words are spoken, but the seeds of revolt are sown in all parts, and are taking root. And what think you, when I say that a league is made with Sejanus, whereby at the time that he in Rome strikes for the empire, Herod strikes for Judea; and while the tetrarch subdues the common enemy here, and Sejanus there—as Sejanus will be emperor

of Rome, yet but for a season—Herod will reign king of the Jews.”

“Is it indeed so?” I asked; for this I own amazed me.

“It is so,” replied Onias; “and the proof thereof thou shalt behold at Machærus with thine own eyes. Herod has not been idle these many years,” though others have slept. We have forgotten even ourselves, but he hath remembered us. The secret chambers of Machærus shine with the arms and the harness of thousands, which he hath caused to be furnished and laid away in their dark repository. So is it in Beth-Harem, at Herodium, but chiefly at Tiberias and Sepphoris, in whose vaults are piled spear, and sword, and shield, and javelin, and polished armour, for as many as for the love of Judea shall be ready to use them.”

“Let my eyes have knowledge of this,” I cried, “though I doubt not thy word, Onias; and——”

“Thine eyes shall see it all,” cried Zadok, “and when they have seen, thou wilt say the half was not told thee.”

Onias paced impatiently the room where we sat, as if he would break through its walls for a larger space.

“Yea,” he exclaimed, lifting up his eyes to heaven, and spreading forth his arms; “yea, the time, the set time is come, and He will comfort Zion. He will build up her waste places. Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. Thou shalt no more be called Desolate, but thou shalt be called Hepzi-bah, and thy land Beulah, for the Lord delighteth in thee. Mine eyes, even mine, shall behold thine honour, and shall see thine enemies, the uncircumcised and the accursed, broken, and scattered, and destroyed, as the chaff before the whirlwind, as the stubble beneath the flail of the thrasher, as the fine dust beneath the hoofs of the horses and the wheels of the chariot! Yea, let mine eye see its desire upon mine enemies, and upon thine, O Jerusalem, daughter

of God ; and then, having seen thy salvation, shall I lie down and sleep in peace."

Zadok then took up the word, and in strains yet more triumphant, sang the redemption of Israel and the glorious kingdom of Messiah.

If I shared their zeal in some degree, my mother, thou wilt not marvel, seeing it is now so long a time that I have laid aside the Roman, and stood forth a veritable Hebrew. Yet can I not agree with Onias in all that he holds of Herod. It may be that by him, as an instrument and a forerunner of our Messiah, a way is to be cleared, obstructions to be removed, the enemy driven out, the land restored to its rightful possessors and governors, and that then the reign of the mysterious prince whom all look for, but none seemeth to comprehend, shall commence, and its fruits bless the earth. So much is certain, that of all who live of our faith and name, Antipas is he who possesseth more than any other the power to do Israel a service which needs first to be done—raise her out of the dust, and deliver her from her oppressors. Till there be victory over her enemies, there can be no peaceful years when the people, sitting under their own vine and fig tree, shall be free to listen to the voice of the prophets whom God shall send, or of eye so single, as to acknowledge and rejoice in Messiah, though God should send him forth. Herod, with the people well disposed towards him, and aided by Philip, may do for Israel what Judas did, and Matathias, and so doing, will do a work for which the ages to come shall celebrate his name even as of that Elias who is first to come.

I did not refuse, ere we took our departure from the dwelling of Zadok, nor did I wish to refuse, to assure Onias that heartily would I work with him in his enterprise for the redemption of our common country. But first I required a more certain knowledge of what the tetrarch had truly purposed, and of what he was truly capable to accomplish, and whether to the ex-

tent supposed the people of Israel would lend themselves to his undertaking, It was therefore agreed that I should see Herod, and from communication with himself, derive the satisfaction which one can only derive by conversing with the principal of any affair that is to be prosecuted.

To Zadok it seemed a thing already established, that the new kingdom was begun, and himself already one among the chief officers of the king's court. He could speak only of the riches which should flow in from conquered nations and tributary provinces; of the places of trust that should be bestowed upon such as, like himself, were early in their zeal, and were known to him who should first fill the throne. His ambition hardly knew any bounds in these imaginary honours. Jerusalem, nothing less, would thenceforward be the place of his abode. Onias, though he seasonably rebuked such excess of expectation, yet in another manner failed not to utter the hopes he could not but entertain of the happy changes that should take place in Judea, when Jerusalem, and not Rome, should be the centre whence should flow honours and trusts; and which should then be bestowed not as now upon the stranger and the Gentile, but upon the true sons of the patriarchs; and when each tribe in its ancient dominion and limits should enjoy its own prince on his own seat of judgment, judging over it.

LETTER XI.

It has seemed a strange thing to me, my mother, when I have thought since of my conversation with Onias and Zadok, and of the disclosures then made concerning Sejanus, and the league which was about to be secretly formed with him, that I, who am still in some sort a Roman, should be privy to such a contract, made or about to be made, whose end and object is a revolution in Rome not less than Judea. A

little while ago, and I should have thought that he designed evil against me, who had held me capable, and reported me so, of any alliance with a spirit so base as that of Sejanus, or of joining myself to an undertaking that aimed at any alteration or overthrow of the powers in Rome. But I now know one thing which once I did not, that 'tis not we who shape our course in life, but providence that marks it for us; that 'tis not good alone that works out good in the plans of God, but evil also, and that so evil is itself in part good. Thus as in the earth foul things, and things not so much as to be named, contribute towards the production of other things the most beautiful and necessary, and even poisonous things to the production of those that are nutritious or medicinal, so wicked men are not wholly hurtful or useless, but seeing that they must exist because human nature is such as it is, they are made to work out ends of righteousness through the providence of God, where they had no good intention or purpose themselves, but rather the contrary. Wherefore it may happen, and so I think it will, that though Sejanus be in himself unworthy, he may, through that which he shall confer upon Herod in return for acts or promises on his part, greatly help the people of God, and their deliverance from a galling bondage. And, surely, little evil would be inflicted upon any, though the monarch of Capreae should be thrown from the rocks whence he casts those whom he desires to torment or destroy, and were buried in the depths of the sea. Sejanus for Tiberius might indeed be no gain to Rome, but it would be no loss. As it is not possible to conceive a worse being than he whom we place in the sovereignty of hell, so cannot the imagination form an image of a human creature more wicked or vile than Tiberius, and whether it is he or his parasite who shall rule in Rome, can matter little to its inhabitants.

Since the evening passed in the dwelling of Zadok, and the conversation held there with the rabbi and

Onias, thy brother has returned to his usual manner, and appears, as Judith asserts, even as was his wont ere he had entered into the schemes which have taken him away from his home, and filled him with anxieties and cares. There is to be seen in him the common effect of relieving one's self of a secret within his own household. To those whom he chiefly esteems, Onias now feels free to speak of the things which engage, or which trouble him, and by dividing thus the burden, it is more easily borne. Judith, to her exceeding joy, now shares his confidence, although she will not approve, as she doubts the wisdom of the plans he is pursuing. Of Herod she holds an opinion, which no persuasion or reason whatever can force her to alter, and which allows her not for one moment to look upon him as he is seen by Onias. Upon what foundation her judgment rests, I as yet know not, nor whether it be such as to warrant the strength with which she holds it; but this is certain, that whatever judgment she forms, is worthy to be well weighed, for she is both deliberate in forming her opinions, and honest and true as Astræa herself.

The reports which reach us of John, now called the Baptist, are of his gathering still more and more about him, and in a land already divided by sects of all kinds, of his forming yet another. By what he is to distinguish himself and his followers I know not, unless it be by the severity of his doctrine and manner of life. This, indeed, is constantly affirmed, that he announces the approach of a prophet greater than himself, whose servant even he is not meet to be; but who that prophet is, he declares not, whether Elijah, or he who shall precede Messiah, or Messiah himself. He has already drawn upon him the hatred of the Pharisees, for he spares not their vices in his harangues to the people; but he secures the regard of the populace, who ever love to hear their rulers involved in at least the same condemnation in which they are themselves included. Against Herod, how-

ever, as well as against the rulers, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, has he lifted up his voice, whose enmity, as it will be easily excited, so he will find it more difficult to escape from or appease. Nay, as for that, there are none in the land, Greek, Roman, or Jew, Pharisee or Essene, Herodian or Sadducee, high or low, from the chief priests and the council at Jerusalem to the ruler of a synagogue, whose enmity he will not rouse against both himself and his followers, if the same kind of speech continues to mark his preaching. On the coming Sabbath, in the chief synagogue of Beth-Harem, I shall trust to hear what his follower, the tanner of Enon, who still lingers here, will have to say.

The Sabbath has come and passed, my mother, and I sit down to relate to you such of its incidents as may give you any satisfaction.

The household of Onias frequent chiefly a synagogue on the banks of the Jordan, not more remote in one direction, than is Beth-Harem in another. Often, however, they resort to that within the walls, of which Shammai and Zadok are rulers; thither was I desirous to go for many reasons, but chiefly that I might learn somewhat more distinctly concerning John from his follower, if, perchance, he should be permitted to declare himself. The cool and balmy air of the morning invited me early abroad, that I might enjoy for a time the solitude which on this day I crave, and of late have been accustomed to, and might be among the first who should reach the synagogue. As I emerged from the shaded grounds of Onias upon the highway leading to the city, I found it already sprinkled with companies of those who, like myself, were going up to worship. The scene was beautiful to the eye, presented by the forms of young and old in every variety of gay clothing, moving along beneath the dark shadows of the trees, which here border and overhang the path. At the well, many stopped to quench their thirst with

its cool waters, and others reposed a while on the rocks, or lay along upon the cool herbage ; but this indulgence lasted not long, but was broken by the shrill echoes of the trumpets of the synagogue sounding the hour of the service.

As we approached, and passed the gates of the city, and entered the streets, the thinly scattered groups of the highway thickened gradually into a numerous throng, pressing forward in one direction. The noise of those, who conversed with animation and energy, was heard on every side. Of some who were near me, I could not, without an effort, which I was not disposed to make, help but hear what were the topics of their discourse. One was loud in his complaints of Shammai. "He preaches not himself," he said, "and those who would preach he hinders. Verily he chiefly loveth the wine cup, and for companions, not those who go up to the house of the Lord, but such as tarry long at the feast."

"Nay," rejoined his companion, "but he is a good man ; he talks not so loud as others, and prays not so loud nor so long, but when he turns his back upon the synagogue, he doth not turn it on his prayers also, as is the custom with many."

"Ah, neighbour, thou ever findest an apology for Shammai. But he is just one of those who trust to what their mothers made them. There is not a precept of the law, nor a custom handed down, but he violateth it, as it shall be convenient. Lest he should be righteous overmuch is his fear ; surely one without ground ; the curse of the Lord will rest upon such. Zadok, truly, savoureth of the former days ; he is one whom the Lord delighteth to honour."

"Verily," said the other, "if the heart is to be judged by the breadth of one's phylacteries, by washings, and fastings, and prayers, then is Zadok a son of God, and there is none like him, for he holdeth himself not washed if he have not removed his ring, though it be slight as a girdle of hair ; and on the

Sabbath treadeth not on the dried grain, lest he unwittingly do the work of the thrasher. Then, when the first day of the week dawneth, let him who standeth in his debt beware the gripe of Zadok; it is as that of death and the grave; no man can deliver."

"I never heard," replied the first, "that he claimed more than his own; surely one hath a right to his own; the law is the law."

"I know not that," responded the other, "if it be that the law is without mercy. The heart was made before the law; the beasts, and even Gentiles, feel pity."

"Justice before mercy," cried his companion, and they were lost to my hearing.

Others, as they walked slowly along, conversed of the hopes of Judea.

"It were truly a joy," said an old man, yet moving firm and upright by the help of his staff, from the head of which glittered jewels of no little value, "if one's days might be prolonged to behold it."

"Who can doubt," said a younger companion upon whom he leaned, "who can doubt that even your eyes shall see it? Many scoff, I know, and say that we hope in vain, and that we are better now than we could be under any change; but they are worthy not so much as a word of rebuke; the people judge otherwise; and who can help believe, that it is God who moves in the heart of a whole people. If it be so, his kingdom is not far off."

"The Lord grant it be so," replied the other; "I may not live to behold that day of glory, but, my son, what with thy virtue and the wealth I leave thee, the fruit of long days of toil, what seat of dignity can there be to which thou mayst not hope to rise?"

"Say not so, my father; thy frame is firm yet, if aged; and it is age and its gathered stores of wisdom that in the new reign will stand in the highest honour."

"All my wisdom," said the other, "is folly. I have added gold to gold, and silver to silver, and how that is to be done, I know well; but of the gentle studies that inform the mind with truth, and make it wise and humble, alas! I am ignorant. What do I love this day but dignity and power, and what but these can my full coffers purchase? But these, my son, they can purchase, and they are something; ay, they are somewhat real; things which the eye can see, and the hands handle, and which will gain the worship of the people. What is wisdom after all? I have secured the best."

"'Tis said, father, that to-day we may know somewhat more of John."

"Why wilt thou speak of him again, my son," cried the other with sudden passion, "a madman and a fool; may Shimei's curses light upon him!" And so, with louder voice and uplifted staff, he was separated from me.

As they were borne away, a voice addressed me from another quarter; "Can you tell me, friend, what this news is from Idumea?"

"I have heard nothing," I said; "you, therefore, can inform me at least of more than I know now."

"What is reported is this, that a prophet has appeared there also, about whom the people gather in multitudes, and follow after him."

"I think it cannot be a rumour having any foundation; Onias hath of late received letters from that region which speak not of it."

"Nevertheless," said he, "it is boldly affirmed, and by those who come from Jerusalem."

"Jerusalem is full of reports and rumours," I replied, "and nothing is to be trusted coming thence."

"That may be," he answered, "and yet it may be true. Among so many lies as now abound, a truth must chance presently, that is my hope. Peace be with you!" and he passed on.

As I now turned into the street, which led directly

to the front of the synagogue, up the steps of which the people were hastening, a beggar seated on the ground, both blind and a cripple, saluted me, asking alms. "For the love of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets, have pity upon me, and give me an alms; how can I labour, having neither sight nor power of motion? The Lord grant thee prosperity as thou rememberest the poor."

"How do I know," said I, "that thine eyes are blind, being hidden by that bandage; and how do I know that thy feet are lame, doubled up beneath that pile of rags?"

"Ah! wretched man that thou art," cried the cripple, "to deride whom God hath visited with his judgments! Blind Levi never spake false; at the house over against the fish-market, at the sign of the chief priest, thou mayst inquire concerning me; but stay, and behold now."

Saying which, ere I could prevent his action, he tore the bandage from his head, revealing a hideous spectacle of the hollow spaces whence the eyes had been eaten away by disease, and threw aside from his limbs the rags that covered them, showing both his feet to have been destroyed by the same awful distemper. "Behold," he cried, "what the leprosy hath taken, and what, blessed be God! it hath left."

"Dost thou still bless God," I asked, "when he hath made thee thus?"

"Yea, truly," said he. "Should I curse him because the warm air blows over me, and the food of the charitable still nourisheth me, and the music of their kind words falls upon my ear? If I see not, I can speak; and if I cannot walk, I can sit and creep; a penny, a penny, for blind Levi."

"I have not even a halfpenny to give thee," I answered; "but when the Sabbath is over, I will call and see thee." As I thus replied, a loud and hoarse voice behind me cried out, "The Lord bless thee, Levi, even though thou breakest the Sabbath!"

and at the same time he who spoke showered down a handful of small coin upon the stones, and swept on his way with flowing robes towards the synagogue. The coin, which I could not give myself, I was forced to aid the blind man to gather up, thinking, as I did so, that there was virtue in the manner of a favour, as in the favour itself. Bidding the cripple then farewell, I turned towards the temple, and passing the outer court, where were many who chose rather to spend their time there in idle gossip than penetrate farther, I entered. It was already filled with more than its usual number of worshippers; nay, all parts of it were thronged with those who were drawn by a desire to hear what the tanner from Enon might have to say, if, perchance, the rulers should allow him to declare himself. The uppermost seats being here, as with us, in the near neighbourhood of the ark of the law, were occupied by the rulers, the chief doctors of Beth-Harem, both Pharisees and Sadducees, and such others as chose to place themselves there; among whom I perceived Onias, and not far from him Saturninus. The services going before the preaching are as in Rome. When, accordingly, the prayers were over, the chanting, and the reading of the law and the prophets, Shammai, who had discharged the last office, sat down, and the congregation waited for him who should speak to them. When there had been silence for some time, and no one had risen, Zadok stood up and said—"This day, men of Israel, is the Scripture brought to pass, which saith, behold I set before you blessing and cursing, a blessing on such as keep the commandments I have delivered unto them, and a curse on such as break them. But you will surely say, Which Scripture is fulfilled? verily, both; the blessing is upon the keepers of the law, and a curse upon the breakers of it. Truly is there a curse upon the despisers of the law; the law is God, and the despiser thereof despiseth God, and blasphemeth. Let him be cursed! let him die the

death of the unrighteous, and let his carcass, as that of Jezebel, be given to the dogs that they may devour it! let his soul perish from among the people of God! The law—it is the law that exalteth Israel upon the high mountain, and maketh her a spectacle of honour to the whole earth. We are the people; yea, verily, we are the people of God, and there is none other. The nations of the earth are accursed, there is reserved for them nothing other than the blackness of darkness for ever; hell shall devour them, nor shall her gates ever deliver them up. The law of the Lord that came by Moses is perfect; despise it not, therefore, ye blasphemers! yea, and moreover, it is everlasting; it is built upon a rock, whose foundations are hidden in the fulness of God; he is its sure support; and in these times, verily in our own day, will he exalt it to more abundant honour. The anointed of the Lord shall appear, Shiloh shall come! the son of David shall arise, and Jerusalem, the holy city, and all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, shall go forth and meet him at his coming, and crown him King! Redeemer of his people! their Saviour out of the hands of their enemies, the repairer of breaches, whose kingdom shall be from everlasting to everlasting! Make yourselves ready, men of Israel, to greet your king. Let the great and the mighty rise up to meet him, for their greatness shall be increased a hundredfold. Let the rich man pour out of his riches, for they shall be multiplied as the sand of the sea-shore. Let the warrior make bright his armour, and gird on his sword, for the enemies of the Lord, as of old, must be slain, ere the true children of the kingdom can enter into their inheritance. Let the lovers of ease and sloth, let those who tremble at their own shadow, let the young maiden and the little children, the poor and humble, flee into safe places and the hidden dens of the mountains—it will be then no time for them—while the great, and the mighty, and the strong, take possession, and scatter the enemy, and build up the walls of the

new kingdom of our God. It shall be an eye for an eye, yea, and a tooth for a tooth, and more than that, ten thousandfold of evil for evil, upon the foes of Judah. For a little finger they have laid upon us, there shall be laid an arm upon them as thick as a man's loins; and what will ye say, if it be told unto you that now, even now, he who shall come and restore all things is standing in the midst of you, and ye know him not? All things are not revealed to all; but by dreams, and visions, and the inspirations of the Most High, are there those—wise men, and, as it were, prophets—unto whom the truth hath been delivered. In due season all eyes shall behold it, and all hearts confess it. When the day, and the hour, and the moment hath arrived which Daniel the prophet hath foretold, then shall the light arise, then the kingdom of heaven hath come nigh unto you, and its everlasting reign commenced. But that moment, who shall declare it? Ye men of Israel, be not deceived; run not hither and thither after those who, like some among us, would lead you astray, pursuing false hopes; the Lord will bring them to confusion. When the great Messiah cometh, all eyes will behold his glory; he who runs may read the signs which shall announce him the Son of God, the King of Israel."

These are some of the things that Zadok said. When he had ceased, the faces of the congregation were turned to where the tanner of Enon sat on one of the chief seats of the synagogue, as if desiring that he would say somewhat; but inasmuch as the ruler did not invite him to teach, he held his peace. Sham-mai, whose office it was to ask those who were present to speak to the people, being desirous that, if it were possible, there should be no disturbance, made a pretence, as if he saw not the wishes of the hearers in their eyes, and turning towards Onias, asked him if he had anything to declare in the audience of the people to say on. But thy brother refused, knowing well what the present temper of the multitude was,

and that it was a vain thing to hope to withstand it. When, therefore, the people saw that Shammai understood them not, or made as though he did not, then they, many of them, with one accord cried out, saying, "We would hear Simon, the tanner of Enon; he hath somewhat to say it concerneth Israel to hear."

Upon that Shammai—not unwillingly in his own heart, for he careth too little for any one opinion to hinder the uttering of any other—turned towards Simon the tanner, and giving him the book of the prophets, bade him read, and then say on.

Upon that Zadok strove with zeal to lay silence on the tanner, Eleazer and others aiding him, and saying many things of John, which, whether they were true or not, only inflamed so much the more the people to hear one of his followers, so that they filled the house with their cries that Simon should be permitted to speak; which, when the rulers saw that it could not be prevented, they made no more resistance, but submitted to what was inevitable. So when Simon saw that no more opposition was made, and when silence had once more been obtained, he stood up and said, "Men and brethren of the house of Jacob, despise not one who is but the servant of servants, who would declare to you the things that concern the salvation of Israel. Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Railing Rabshakehs have not prevailed, nor cursing Shimeis, to stop the mouth of him who bringeth good news, good news of the coming of the kingdom of God. Your ears are open to hear, and your hearts to confess the power of the Most High. Let the wicked, as now, gnash their teeth, but they shall come to nought. The Lord God of Israel in the days of our fathers, when they had gone down into Egypt, having pity upon his own children, when he had punished them, delivered them by the hand of his servant Moses; and when in-process of time having transgressed again, as, being a stiff-necked and rebellious race, they have ever

done, Judah was carried away captive into Babylon. But when ye had suffered the just punishment for your iniquities, the Lord again had compassion, and your prosperity was restored, and Jerusalem and Judah were clad in their beautiful garments. In these latter days God hath promised to redeem us by a prophet like unto Moses. For our transgression and idolatries, for our revoltings and our blasphemies, have we these many years suffered his just rebuke. But the sceptre hath at length departed from Judah, and the lawgiver from between her feet, and the Gentile hath possessed the land in all her borders; and now, therefore, the times being fulfilled, the eyes of all the world look for the appearing of him who shall save us. The time of our affliction being ended, as the prophets have foreshown, we now wait for the Redeemer. But will he come before our chastisements have cleansed us? and our stripes have purged us? and our captivity and our bonds have humbled us? Ye men of Israel, it is your sins that make a separation between you and your God! Ye must prepare the way before him by repentance. Repent ye of your iniquities, if ye would behold the kingdom of God. Forsake the evil of your ways—your prayers that are an empty sound, your fastings that are a mockery, your worshippings and sacrifices that are but a vain show! Think no longer to deceive man and God by the false appearance. The Lord seeth the heart: the Lord despiseth the hypocrite: the Lord looketh through you as the eye through the clear water. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings altogether, and make a straight path, swept, and cleansed, and thoroughly purged, and the messenger of the covenant shall suddenly come, bringing salvation and healing on his wings: this is the message of John. He is the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God! He is but as one that runneth before the king. He is as the star

of the morning, whose coming proclaimeth the rising of the greater light, that enlighteneth the whole world. He is not that greater light. Ye, nevertheless, muse in your hearts whether he be the Christ or not. Wise men, the Scribes and Pharisees, priests and Levites of Jerusalem, have come asking, Art thou the Christ? tell us plainly. He hath denied not, but confessed, saying, I am not the Christ. He saith only that he is one who cometh preaching, and saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand, even at the door; and exhorting men to repentance, that they may be found worthy to enter therein. His baptism is unto repentance. He who cometh to him, and is baptised with water, and confesses his sins, belongeth to him, and is as a stone fitted and polished to be built into the temple and palace of our king. Come, then, ye men of Judea, ye who look for the consolation of Israel in the fall of the modern Babylon, ye who would make ready for the Son of God, ye who are of the true children of Abraham, come to the baptism of John, and be washed of your iniquities. Come while the invitation is held out, and the door is open, and the lamps are burning; for if ye refuse, there are those, not of the house of Abraham, whom God shall call, and who shall come in and sit down at the feast which shall be prepared, and dwell in the cities that shall be built of every precious stone, shining as the sun at noon-day. Come and make ready for the Prince. He standeth in the midst of you, and ye know him not; but he will suddenly reveal himself, and his glory shall be apparent to every eye; and then will you, who harden your hearts and shut your ears, be covered with confusion, and your shame shall be published from one end of heaven to the other.

When Simon had ended these words, and had sat down, all eyes were fastened upon him, as upon one who had spoken what at least he truly believed, and who desired the welfare of those whom he had reproved. The assembly would willingly have heard

him farther, but he seemed not inclined to multiply words.

There being silence for a brief space as Simon ceased, Zadok seemed like one who would fain deliver himself of other matter that appeared to be restrained with difficulty; nor would he have been withheld from giving vent to it, as I think, but that he feared lest the people, who so evidently were impressed by the words of the tanner, would listen to what he might say with either impatience or open signs of disapprobation. Those, however, who apprehended lest he might rise and utter himself with new violence, were relieved when they beheld Shammai stand up, who, if sometimes through his Jewish nature he is violent, is for the most part calm and forbearing.

"Ye Jews!" said he, "servants of God, lovers of the law, and children of Abraham, be not too much carried away by hopes which may end in disappointment. To judge of the truth of the claims of one who shall declare himself a prophet, or the Christ himself, ye must hold your minds clear from the false leadings of passion, or of any fixed opinion; else will ye judge, not after the truth of things, but only after some image or idol in your own thoughts. When we feed our desires high, by much meditation upon them, then are the eyes of our mind already blinded, and though we should open them, we should see nothing with clearness, nor as it is in itself. By looking outwards, we should only take another way of looking inwards. Wherefore dwell not too much on what is to be, or what may happen, or upon the purposes of God not yet revealed; for, so doing, ye will only raise up phantoms, perhaps of error, from which ye will find it hard to escape; but rather wait, doing with zeal the duties which are uppermost, until that which is to come is come, and taketh the shape which God shall give; then will your eyes and minds be purged, and without mote or film, error or idol, to judge a just judgment. We know, for so the prophets have declared

it, that Messiah shall in these days appear, and all Israel, as one man, awaiteth his rising; but we know not how he shall appear, in what form, nor with what circumstances of greatness and glory; nor do we know in what part of our wide land he shall first display his power. Let us allay our heats, and believe that the God who gave us our lawgiver, and brought us out of Egypt, and hath sustained us hitherto, will now so manifest himself, that as soon as he appeareth, every heart and every tongue shall confess him and shout hosannah! Simon hath spoken well; and concerning John hath said things that in themselves are credible, and in agreement with the Scriptures, and are not dishonourable to John, not though he were a prophet indeed. But we will stay our judgment, men of Beth-Harem, until we shall behold him with our own eyes; we will not rest in the judgment of another. The truth we now possess serves us well; we will not throw it from us without good reasons. Again, I say, let us each honour the law, observe the Sabbaths, keep the feasts, offer our sacrifices, do the work which falls to us every day, as those who are both men and Hebrews, and wait for what God shall bring to pass."

Shammai, when he had finished, and the poor had been remembered, dismissed the assembly, who departed with more quietness than they would have done but for the parting words of the ruler. The quietness, however, lasted not long, as it cannot among this fierce and contentious people, broken into so many factions, each aiming at the injury or destruction of the other: for no sooner had the multitude within the synagogue joined itself to the multitude without, than conversation and dispute arose on all sides concerning what had been said by Zadok, Simon, and Shammai. Some blamed one, and some another; some applauded one, and some another. Among others, I saw the old man whom I had overheard on the way to the synagogue, apparently with much

passion accusing the ruler as he descended the steps of the building.

"Is it," said he, "from the ruler of our synagogue that we are to hear fools and madmen, idle wanderers and false-hearted deceivers, held up to honour? Who but Simon, and wretches like him, believe in John?"

"Good sir," replied Shammai, "I have held up no deceiver or blasphemer to honour before the people. Had I held up John to honour, which I did not, it is not yet shown that he is mad, or false, or impious."

"Yet," said the other, "every one of any consideration knows it."

"The people do not know it," replied the ruler; "they are on John's side."

"Who," said the rich man, "are the people, and what do they know, and how should they judge? Have our rulers, the priests, the council, our rich or learned men, believed in him? That is the only question worth asking. They of Jerusalem condemn him."

"To be condemned by them of Jerusalem is often to be commended of the truth," answered Shammai.

"Thou art a disciple of John and the devil, and so shall I report thee," cried the other in a rage. Shammai laughed, while the other turned away trembling with anger, more even than with years. The people, who had heard what the ruler had said, applauded him, and said, "Shammai is the friend of truth; he is afraid neither of the rich nor the powerful."

Zadok approaching, some one cried out, "Who is Zadok's Christ, standing in the midst of us? Is Zadok also a believer in John?"

Another exclaimed, "It is a greater than John the Baptist Zadok believes in."

"Or his disciple, Simon the tanner," shouted a third with a deriding tone.

"Blessed the people," cried yet another voice from the crowd, "to whom the Lord shall send a king,

dressed in skins himself has cured, and his sceptre an ox's goad."

"Nevertheless," said another, "an ox's goad in the hands of him with whom is the spirit of the Lord were more than all the power of all the Herods. Remember Samson's jaw-bone of an ass."

"Let him who accuseth Herod look to it," cried an angry voice, "lest he fall into the jaws not of an ass, but a lion."

"That was the voice of Zadok," said one aloud.

"It was not the voice of Zadok," cried the rabbi, as he stalked gloomily away, and left the crowd behind. At this moment, those with whom we had been standing about the steps of the synagogue and between the building and the walls of the outer court, were drawn to the street by the loud tones of some one declaiming to the people, where, raised above the crowds upon a stone at the corner of the market, he stood reporting news which he had heard of a prophet having risen up among the hills of Idumea, and to whom all in that region were giving ear. The throng thickened around him, eagerly listening to what he had to say, and making inquiries concerning the time and manner of his appearing. They were interrupted by the voice of another from the crowd, who exclaimed, "Trust not these lying rumours, people of Beth-Harem; give no heed to them. I am but just arrived from the hills of Idumea on the way to Tiberias, where the people knew nothing of this prophet. Listen to the instructions of your ruler Shammai, and run not after every shadow."

While this person spoke, the other who had delivered the news with so much boldness mingled with the crowd, and disappeared, pursued by the cries of the people.

I now turned away, and leaving the city behind, bent my steps towards the Jordan. The soft breath of the fresh air, burdened with spicy odours, together with the calm aspect of nature, was like a medicine, healing the distempered body, and restoring the mind

also, after the feverish heats of the assembly I had left. I sought at once the banks of the river, that I might move quietly along in the solitude of its deep shadows, rather than mingle with those who, on the highway, would be passing in the same direction with myself. The atmosphere was temperate, and so still, it hardly so much as made the leaves to tremble on the lightest boughs, or the tenderest flowers to bend their heads; birds and insects, enjoying the sacredness of the day which gave them security against their common enemy, saluted the ear with their sweetest notes; the serpent, which glided across my path, startling me by his fearful shape and glistening hues, seemed to dread me less than on other days, and went slowly by. Reaching the stream, I seated myself upon a rock lying within the fields of Onias, not far from the grotto of which I have already told you, and leaning against the trunk of an aged willow, gave myself to the thoughts which the scenes before me, and those which I had just witnessed in Beth-Harem, equally suggested. How peaceful is nature! I thought—how calmly her various courses move on! There is here no confusion, jarring, and discord. The sun, the moon, and the stars, all wheel around us, and the ear cannot hear the sound of their going, neither do they ever cross each other's path. All is peace, order, and silence. The trees and herbs all grow to their full stature, yet we see not, we hear not, as they go up from strength to strength. But with man all is rage, disorder, and strife; nothing is quiet; no motion is without noise, interference, or conflict. In the mind of each individual there is warfare, peace never; and for nations it seems their chosen work to injure or destroy. Within their own borders they chafe even among themselves, being uneasy in every present state; and while they look about for beneficial changes—at least for changes—know not what to choose, nor where the good they seek after is to be

found, and often, in the pursuit of a fancied advantage, plunge into deeper ill.

Why and to what good end is this restlessness of our people, this discontent with the present, these expectations, this longing for a greater future, a wider kingdom? Is it of good? Is it of God? They are tossed, and sway to and fro, beating against each other, foaming with, as it seems, useless passion, even like the waves of the sea driven by the winds—like this river, now indeed calm and sending forth the gentle music of its murmur as it rolls over its bed, or winds among these rocks and aged roots on its margin; but anon rushing onward with full and overflowing banks, uprooting the giants of the forest, and carrying destruction to the fields of the husbandman. But what, then; is not all alike? Is nature always calm and peaceful? Is she not, even like man, subject to passionate outbreaks, to violent and sudden change, to uproar and wide-spread desolation? The sun and the stars are indeed quiet and still in their courses, and shed down wholesome influences; but then the comet comes and glares upon the world, bringing with it pestilence, mildew, floods, and war. The solid earth quakes, and whole cities are engulfed. The winds, which now cannot be heard, to-morrow rise in tempests, and forests are torn in fragments, ships dashed in pieces, and the proudest works of man levelled with the ground. Animals prey upon one another; and even the tender dove pursues her diseased offspring with cruelty. Is man worse than nature—nature better than man? Are they different? Should they be? Doubtless the same Being hath made the whole. We are all alike. There is evil everywhere—evil in nature, and evil in man. Whence is this, and why? Alas! who can tell?

But whither have I run?

I rose from my rock on the river's side, and turned towards the house. I must needs pass the grotto. As I drew nigh, I perceived some one within; it was

Judith, who had there passed in seclusion the time which I had spent by the river. She bounded towards me as I passed the entrance, and joining me, we went through the vineyards, prolonging our walk, and as we went, plucked here and there a half-dried bunch of grapes, which had been left hanging on its vine.

"You went not," I said, "to the synagogue within the walls."

"No," she replied; "yet I joined our people in their worship. I accompanied those of our household who frequent the synagogue hard by the Ox Ford. I knew that within the walls there would be confusion, at least that the peace of the hour would be destroyed; and I am unwilling to lose that peace, or to witness aught in the house of God that becomes not his service. How went it? Was Simon there?"

I then related what had occurred.

Judith seemed much struck by what had fallen from Simon, and finding that the disturbance had been so little, was sorry she had not been there. Concerning John she was desirous to learn all that had been said. "This man," said she, "seems, in truth, like one of the old prophets. He not merely feeds the hopes of the people, but rebukes their hypocrisies and iniquities, and ere their hope can be fulfilled of the coming kingdom, requires the heart to be made pure by repentance. In this one beholds signs of truth. Impostors are not of this sort. Thinking more of some success of their own than of the good of the people, they do but flatter them. Those in power especially do they seek to please; but this John, not only, if we hear aright, hath he published the faults and errors of the chief men of the nation, but even of Herod. Would that I might hear and see him! Would that I had heard his follower Simon!"

At the hour of supper, the table of Onias was again surrounded by many of the chief citizens of Beth-Harem, with the rulers, Shammai, Zadok, and Eleazer,

and others whom the open hospitality of thy brother draws around him.

They did not fail to attack Shammai as one who regarded with too much forbearance such as were proposing novelties, and impairing the common reverence both for the literal requirements of the law and the traditions of the elders. "In truth," said Zadok, "our ruler is little better than a Sadducee, and what can be worse than a Sadducee? A pious Jew can think of nothing so bad."

"Were it true that I am indeed a Sadducee," replied Shammai, laughing, "I should find myself among no worse companions for forsaking my present friends—even the rulers of the synagogue. I then might be able to boast of the alliance of Caiaphas and Annas, among many others equally honourable ; and since thou knowest, Zadok, I am of a boastful nature, and yet have never made such boast, thou couldst not ask a better proof that I am sounder in my faith than thy words imply."

"In appearance," replied Zadok, "thou art on the right side, but who can doubt thy little esteem for it, who hears thee defend, as to-day, perverters and deniers of the truth, railers, accusers, rebels, and blasphemers, like this wild preacher of the desert?"

"All in Beth-Harem who know me," rejoined Shammai, "know that I place not the same value in outward observances that many do ; that I prefer the law to the traditions of the elders, and the reality of virtue to its semblance ; and rate much higher goodness in the life, with fewer prayers at the corners of the streets, than a life less strict or secretly vile, with a great show of worship. I am not a Sadducee, inasmuch as I doubt not the resurrection of the just and the unjust, and hold to the existence of a spirit in man, and of spirits in the air and the heavens ; and yet, again, I am, because I think of our actions that we may make them as we please, being free and not bound by fate in the use we make both of the body and mind. As for those who go about to teach

the people either by the wayside, at the markets, or in the synagogue, I would not stop their mouths. Faith is many-sided, Zadok, and still faith, which side soever we choose. We trouble ourselves over-much as to what a man thinks. What have we to do with that which passeth within a man, so long as what he does, and what we see, is according to the rules of religion and the customs of men? Why should we go prying into the secrets of the spirit, and make it so much as the concern of a moment, as to their agreement with this great rabbi, or another; with Hillel, or Simon the Just, or Saddoc, or Judas? For myself, I choose out of many things what I judge best, and pray that others may do the same; so shall peace be attained, and virtue be no less."

"Hear him! hear him!" cried Zadok; "not less than John himself ought we to esteem him a traitor to the truth and a misleader of the people! It is well, Shammai, that the people of Beth-Harem know more of thee than thy no-faith in Moses, or it would go hard with thee."

"The people of Beth-Harem," rejoined the ruler, "see wider and farther than many of their countrymen, and it may be that some of their teachers are to be thanked for that. They have come to consider that he is the best disciple of Moses and the prophets who observes their precepts in their spirit, and while they see their spirit honoured, allow some liberty in other things. If they are satisfied that the ruler Shammai is just and faithful in his office, they will not rebuke him because he mingles together the good things to be found scattered among many teachers and many sects. I doubt not, Zadok, much that would be valuable might be learned even from this Satan John, as I have already learned somewhat of value from his disciple. The fair Judith will agree with me."

"The daughter of Onias," said Zadok, "is a daughter of a Pharisee of the straitest sect."

"I fear," said Judith, "I shall give little pleasure to either side, to Shammai or Zadok, when I say, that I rest not wholly satisfied with the teachings of either the Pharisee or the Sadducee; but in this can I go with the good Shammai, that I would willingly hear what any holy man, who would instruct us, may have to say, whether a prophet of God, or but a common man. Surely the fruits of religion are not so rich or abundant, but that we might greet with joy any new proposed doctrine that should promise to act with better effect on the heart and life, and raise the general condition of man."

"Verily, Onias," cried Zadok, "it seemeth to me as if I were sitting in the company of the uncircumcised. My ears are pierced as with a sharp sword. It becomes thee surely to take away the child from the false teaching of a Sadducee."

Shammai laughed heartily.

Said Onias, "No, Zadok, Judith is of age; she hath her mind in her own keeping now, and must open or shut it, to darkness or light, as shall seem best to her. But even as her father is a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee, so do I deem her, in spite of what thou hast now heard, to be a true daughter of Abraham. But when it shall be seen that Shammai leadeth her astray, then shall I call for thee to use thy power to convert her from the evil of her way."

"Ah, happy would that day be for thy daughter and for Israel," cried Zadok. "Shammai may have many virtues, but he hath not all."

"But Zadok has," said the ruler. "Daughter, how shalt thou possibly learn humility, the chief of virtues, of this man?"

"If that virtue is chief on thy catalogue, it stands not so high on mine," said Zadok, "nor on any other, as I think."

"Well," said Shammai, smiling, as Zadok took him so literally, "we will not dispute about that. I give thee joy, Judith, of thy teacher."

So it is with these rulers, they are ever at odds; but their difference leads not to strife or anger, notwithstanding Zadok seems like one who, if his passions were once roused, would rage with a fury that would overleap all bounds. Much as he in his heart dislikes what he deems the looseness of Shammai, and the light esteem in which he holds the minute observances which he himself so highly values, as frequent washings, many fastings and prayers, together with a sacred reverence of all traditions, he yet cannot but revere in him a general innocence of life, and a goodness of heart, far exceeding his own, and most of those who would accuse him of unbelief.

When the company was departed, the music had ceased, and the lamps which had been hung in the trees, for the reason that there was no moon, were extinguished, and those who had been disporting themselves were withdrawn, Onias took me with him apart, as if to communicate somewhat of moment.

“Julian,” said he, “the time draws on that there must be deeds as well as words with those who would serve Israel. Much has already been achieved by messengers who have passed through the land, having communication with those who are of our part, and bringing over such as it was found inclined the same way, and could be trusted. But more remains, and thy knowledge is now needed; but that it may yield the most and the best fruit, I would that thou shouldst see Herod; he alone can lay open before thee the true condition of the affair we have taken in hand, and which, borne onward with one spirit, shall crown the land and us with honour. The tetrarch has heard of thy doings at Cæsarea, and it is no displeasure to him that thou hast fallen into discredit with Pilate. He desires to see thee, and I have said that I would urge thy presence at Machærus, where Herod yet abides.”

I replied that I would seek him there without delay, as I should with pleasure visit so celebrated a

spot as the fortress and city of Machærus, and with hardly less, the country that was to be traversed in the way thither; and, indeed, more than all, was I curious to see Herod himself. Onias said that he could not accompany me, as at first he had purposed to do, since it was necessary for him to depart in another direction, and he left me to take my own time and way, offering the use of both his stables and slaves.

Thus, my mother, am I binding myself to the fate of Judea; an issue so little to have been conceived as possible but so little while ago. I have passed in so short a time, and by the power of such extraordinary events, from the life and the feelings of a Roman, to the character and the habits and faith of a Jew, that I can hardly believe myself to be the same person who dwelt with you in Rome, nor can I think that all this has happened without the interposing of a hand, of whose guidance we all are the subjects, though ignorant when and in what manner, and in the arrangement of what events it is put forth. Happy for us that we stand not at the helm of our little vessel, but instead, some good angel who seeth farther and better, and hath a stronger arm, and who, though he guideth us sometimes on shallows, sometimes on quicksands, and sometimes among rocks and eddies, doth it that our experience may be more various, and so good be shown to make a part of all evil. Who, if he might, would dare to choose for himself among the possible events of life? Who so bold as, if it were permitted him, to be the pilot of his own bark, seeing so often, as we do in the issue of events, that what at a distance we had dreaded, and if we could, would have shunned, hath proved benignant in our experience of it, and that what we had greatly desired, had it happened, could have been no other than disastrous or fatal. And how greatly will our judgments of this kind be confirmed and extended, when, as in the resurrection of the just, we shall look back upon the whole of life,

and behold each event as it stands bound to every other, both with those which preceded it and those that come after. In the light of that vast survey, the names which we now give to many events will be changed, or quite reversed; evil will be seen to be good, and good evil.

Great delight and large profitings have come to me, when thinking thus, from the pages of David, Solomon, and the prophets. There seems to be no mood of the mind which finds not in them its proper nourishment or medicine. Rightly was the son of David named the Wise. The heart with all its weaknesses and errors, and life with all its lights and shadows, and in all its changes, are by him painted with so much truth, that the reader sees not whence such stores of knowledge could have come, save from the inspiration of God. Else, methinks, he must have lived life over many times, and in his own fortunes experienced the various lots of different persons; which we cannot believe, unless we agree with the philosophers of India, or receive the fancies of Pythagoras. In David, moreover, who can fail to find the thoughts and the words in which, whether he be joyous and grateful, or afflicted and penitent, cheerful or desponding, he can best offer up his sacrifice to God. No power, no words of his own, could avail so well. David the sinner, and David the saint, as he was now a sufferer, and now an enjoyer, has alike set forth his sorrows and his joys before God in prayer and praise; and there, as in a mirror, doth every one who, like him, has sinned and suffered, or obeyed and rejoiced, behold his own soul truly reflected. In none, either of the philosophers of Greece or the moralists of Rome, do I find so much of human life justly depicted, of the human heart so clearly revealed; nor, which is much more, do they ever speak in that tone of sincerity which marks the prophets of Judea; and it is this virtue, in a writer of morals above all others, that deserves our affection and reverence. The Jew

writes of life and man as if it were a matter not of art but of life and death; the Greek and the Roman, as if to treat a subject as becomes a rhetorician. The Jew writes to help and save him who may read; the Roman or the Greek, to display his genius in a perfect treatise. The Jew, therefore, we love and obey as a divinity; the Roman or the Greek we honour as an artist who has completed a beautiful work. For the last we have admiration; for the first sighings, and tears, and an altered life.

Farewell, my mother, and the blessings of all the prophets be upon thee.

LETTER XII.

As Onias had desired that I should without delay set forth on my journey to Machærus, I should have departed on the morning of the first day of the week, but that some other cares detained me, and especially the necessity I felt to be upon me to keep my promise to the poor leper whom I was to visit at his own home. Wherefore, instead of immediately making for Machærus, I turned first towards Beth-Harem, to seek out the dwelling of the beggar. From his account of its place, it was easily found, near to the inn bearing the sign of the high priest painted upon its front. Just beyond it stood a shapeless mass of extensive ruins, whose broken roofs and crumbling walls kept out neither the heats of summer nor the rains and cold of winter; this was pointed out to me as the abode of the wretched outcast.

The rooms immediately upon the street I found unoccupied, but as I penetrated farther into the gloomy recesses, and then paused to consider which way I should turn—it was the sixth hour—I was arrested by the voice of one as if in prayer. I stood still, and heard with distinctness the voice of a girl, as it seemed to me, rehearsing, as if from memory, a

psalm of David, where he deplores and confesses his sins, and cries out from the great deeps of his distress for pity and pardon. The voice having ceased, the tones of another, which I at once remembered as those of the leper, fell on my ear: "Now, my child, that thou hast repeated those words of the good king and prophet, let me hear thy voice in prayer also;" with which request the daughter complying, I heard the same low and sorrowful voice lifted up in prayer to God; yet though the voice was as of one who was burdened, the themes on which it dwelt were such as to inspire cheerfulness and gratitude, rather than sorrow or repining. Many blessings were enumerated that had been bestowed upon them who were ready to perish by the good providence of God, and by the hands of those who had been moved to take pity on them. When the worship was over, I moved from where I had stood, and advancing towards the door of the inner room, passed it, and stood before them.

It was a pitiful yet pleasing spectacle that presented itself; the beggar was seated in a corner of the room upon a pile of clean straw or rushes, leaning against the wall, with face upturned, as if to catch the light that streamed in from a single window or crevice in the wall, while at his side, also crouched upon the straw, sat her whose voice I had heard, and who had already taken in her hands withes, which, with nimble fingers, she was weaving into baskets. Some jars and coarse pottery, with a few rude seats, were the only objects in the room. The daughter looked up at my approach, but without surprise, as if accustomed to the intrusion of visitors through the open doors and fissures. The voice of the old man, as his ear caught my footstep, was first heard, "Who comes here, my child?"

"A stranger," she replied.

"Not wholly a stranger," I answered; "it was I who yesterday, doubting the truth of your word, promised to see where you dwelt."

"It is not much," replied the old man, "to say you are welcome to such a place as this, but I am glad to hear your voice again. It was far better to hear your voice yesterday, than the clatter of the brass which the Pharisee showered upon me, which but for you I could never have found. My child had left me for a space, and I alone could not have gathered it up; besides that others would have snatched it from me. It was the same man who a little after caused me to be driven away by the servants of the synagogue, with reproaches and blows, as a Sabbath-breaker. But if I broke the Sabbath by begging, he broke it as well by giving."

"He could not resist the fine occasion," I answered, "of making a show of his benevolence."

"That was it, I am sure," answered the daughter, "though I would not say so of any whom we did not well know. But that Pharisee is known to be very rich, and yet exacting towards all who are dependent on him, casting into prison such as owe him but a few pence. Surely the heart of such a one is not right."

"And then," said the father, "afterwards showing his zeal for the Sabbath-day by setting the servants of the synagogue to drive me away. I knew well that it was held unlawful by many to give on the Sabbath; but I thought within myself there would be, out of the great crowds I heard would be gathered together, some who would think that to give an alms would be as acceptable an offering as to stand within and pray."

"Surely it must be so," said the daughter; "the Sabbath is kept and God is worshipped by doing good, as well as by saying prayers and reading the law. Is it not, sir?"

"I think so, indeed; the law but requires us to rest on the Sabbath, and not profane it; it is men who add the observances of which you complain. But why," I asked, "do you beg?" addressing the

daughter; "is not your labour sufficient for your honest support?"

"Oh no, sir; it brings us but very little, hardly enough to supply our food; besides which, we must pay for our portion of this crazy tenement. But the people of Beth-Harem are kind to us, lepers though we be; yet would they avoid us, doubtless, had they not known us in our better days. You need not fear anything, sir, because I tell you my father is a leper; the physicians say that he will suffer no more, and that no one now will receive it from him."

I said that I feared it not; and asked how it was, that while her father had suffered so much, she had herself escaped?

"Verily," cried the father, "through the good providence of God, by a miracle of his lovingkindness. But beside her, all are lost—all."

I then inquired how so great a calamity had overtaken them.

"I will tell you," replied the cripple. "My birth-place is this very Beth-Harem. But when I became of age, and had chosen what employment I would follow, my father gave to me and a younger brother so much of his fortune as he could part with, and we departed for Tyre, that we might traffic there as merchants; for we both preferred that way of life to any other. There we prospered for many years; we each took a wife, and our children grew up around us. But my brother, not content with the measure of our good fortune, which was already more than that of any merchant in Tyre, being given also to excess in his manner of living, resolved to travel into India, and even China, for the sake of the great riches which many had found there, and which he was sure he should find also. But alas! he had been gone but a brief space of time, when I discovered, that in ways which I had not suspected, he had wasted a great part of our substance by debts he had contracted, and soon, in addition to these, instead of wealth flowing in

from the East, I was also obliged to use what was left in payment for losses he had incurred there, partly through error, and partly through riotous living. Thus was the prosperity of the morning of our life already over. But this we might have borne, and from it recovered, had not a greater and unlooked-for calamity ensued. When for a long time we had had no tidings of my brother, we were roused at midnight by the cry of the servants that he had returned. It was he in truth; and we received him as one whom, though he had greatly erred, we still loved. We embraced him with affection, and tried to surpass each other in offices of friendship, in which we were the more ready, as he said that by reason of the fatigue of the way he had fallen ill; but when the morning came, what was our horror to behold him white with the leprosy! The plague could not be stayed; it was in the state which is most dangerous to those who approach it, and seized both our households, the old and the young. We were before beggars, now we were lepers also; all fled from us; my wife and my children died, their limbs dropping off one after another; this one alone being spared, upon whom, through the good providence of God, the disease never laid its loathsome touch. My brother, the author of all our miseries, yet lives, and his wretched family with him, as if to add to his unhappiness by the continual reproaches their sufferings utter; and truly doth he deserve all he endures. My lot is happy, compared with his, in that those whom I loved died, and so escaped what the rest endure; and this blessed child, who alone lives, was too pure for the foul curse to come near her. My hope by night and by day is, that I may soon perish, and release her from this cruel bondage; it were a sin to pray for death, but I may hope it."

The girl wept bitterly as her father said these things.

It seemed to be indeed as he had said, that there

was somewhat too pure in her for disease to harm her; for, notwithstanding the extremity of their poverty, there was none of its loathsomeness about her; but though poor, her garments were clean, as was the straw on which she sat, and her countenance was bright with the hues of health.

I asked concerning his brother, and whether he too was in Beth-Harem?

"No," he answered; "he separated himself from all whom he had known, and departed for the desert. He inhabits a solitary dwelling on the burning sands, where the Jordan leads towards the Salt Sea, dependent upon the mercies of the passing traveller, the shepherd, and the hunter—who, as they pass, will throw them a little food—and upon what fish they can sometimes catch in the river; but of this they must be deprived as, one after another, their members become diseased and perish."

I said that I thought it strange that, having been born in Beth-Harem, and being well known, there were not more who were prompt to aid him, and diminish farther the evils of his lot.

He said that he had not long been returned to Beth-Harem, and but few of the inhabitants knew he was there. "But," he added, "so great is their horror of this plague, that they would not approach me; and it must be added also, that they accuse me of the faults of my brother, and visit the punishment upon my head, as well as his, who alone was guilty."

Then bestowing upon them such relief as would amply supply their present wants, I departed, assuring them I should see them again, when I should have returned from my journey.

Hastening back again to the dwelling of Onias, I passed the remainder of the day in making such preparations as were needful for the road, and for an absence of many days. To Ziba I could intrust the chief part of these cares. I did not fail to relate to Judith all I had learned of the leper and his daughter,

and to raise such an interest for them in her heart, as to engage her active exertions in their behalf. Though professing, and really feeling, all the horror which any do of the disease of leprosy, and like all of this people, believing it infectious in all stages of its progress, she yet promised, that by some means which she would trust her ingenuity to devise, she would contribute of her abundance to their comfort.

When the morning of the second day had come, I set forth, with Ziba as my companion, for the region of the Dead Sea. The cooler weather that announces the approach of winter beginning to prevail, our preparations were different from those which were to be made when we took our departure from Cæsarea. But though the winter is near at hand, occasionally there happen days of little less burning heat than in the summer months ; in the night, the cold, with heavy dews, always returning. The forests still retain their leaves, though their verdure is partly gone. Our way lay in a plain course in the direction of the river, by following which, without turning either to the right or left, we could not fail to arrive at our destined haven, inasmuch as the city and fortress of Machærus are visible at the point where the Jordan empties into the sea. We might have made our path shorter, by striking across the plain where the Jordan bends, as it doth below where the Heshbon joins it, far to the west ; but for the sake of the greater pleasantness of the road, we kept on the lower banks of the river. We wound along, therefore, among many villages and cultivated grounds, without interruption, until, in the neighbourhood of Jericho, the land loses its fertility, and stretches out on every side, a wide and barren desert of rock and sand.

But after leaving Beth-Harem, we entered upon this fertile tract I have spoken of, lying first immediately upon the borders of the stream, and then stretching toward the east, till, after not many leagues, it meets the mountains, which, running

from north to south, form a wall, as it were, between Judea and the farther east. Of those mountains the nearer were the hills of Gilead, partly bare, rocky, and torn, by the descending torrents of the early spring, and partly covered with the same forests and verdure that clothed the plains at their roots. The walls and towers of frequent villages, breaking through the dark foliage, with their white lines, gave a new beauty to the scene. I cannot but be of the opinion, that neither in the neighbourhood of Rome or Naples, nor on the plains of the Po, is there anything more rare or beautiful to be seen than that which here lay before me ; which must be taken as high commendation, seeing that my prejudices are still (in spite of my present choice) in favour of the earlier scenes of my youth. Ziba was clear that these plains were no way inferior to those of Esdraelon. Crossing the Heshbon on a bridge of Roman structure, from which we could just discern the pinnacles of Heshbon itself, we soon came to Bethabara, a village not large, but agreeably situated, not far from Jordan, and shaded by surrounding groves of palms, poplars, and sycamore. Passing through it, we discovered that very soon we must enter upon the sands of the desert ; for from a rising ground, which we were obliged to ascend, we beheld the cultivated lands gradually yielding to rock and barren fields ; all signs of verdure being confined to the thickets of willow and olive, that, until within a few miles of the Dead Sea, continue to line the banks of the river. Rising high on the eastern side of the prospect, we beheld the tops of Mount Pisgah, and the mountains of Nebo ; and farther in the same direction, and towards the south, the bleak and glistening summits of the hills of Arabia.

It was when the sun had reached his highest point, and his rays were falling upon us, almost with the power of the summer solstice, that we entered upon the wild and savage region—blasted by the hand of

God himself, because of the sins of its inhabitants—which extends from the neighbourhood of Jericho on either side of the river, even unto the further extremity of the sea. The plains of this desert, which lie elevated far above the Jordan, present to the eye only one unvaried scene of desolation ; being composed of whitish rocks just breaking through the parched earth, or of moving sands, or else of soil seamed with cracks and fissures, occasioned by long droughts, and also by sudden and violent torrents from the mountains in the season of the rains, which wear their way by a thousand channels to the river. When entered upon this dismal region, the river, though but at a small distance from us, was no longer visible, nor even the thickets which clothe its banks ; nor would one believe that they so much as had any existence, so far were they sunk below the level of this arid tract. All we could see, therefore, was but a wide prospect of shining sand, painful for the eye to look upon, bounded in the dim and hazy distance by lofty precipices of rock ; but, new to me, it possessed its own charms, as doth everything that the hand of God has made—the wild and the terrible, as well as the calm and the beautiful. Nay, the awe of his presence is a more sensible influence among such scenes as these ; since, as there is no other being whom he permits to dwell there, no other to divert our thoughts, we imagine him to make it his peculiar abode, and think of him alone. Where men dwell together in thick and prosperous communities, and we behold on every side the forms of human art, or else nature wholly altered by that art, and thrown into shapes which the mind has conceived, then we are ever prone to rest in the nearest and feeblest cause of what we see, to think more of the changes which man has wrought in what was brought ready prepared to his hand, than of the awful power that effected the first creation, and called into being the first substance. The scenes of nature, wild and untenanted, even as they came from the

hand of their Maker, are of most power on the mind ; thus, too, the ocean moves the soul more than the land.

We had approached towards the midway point of this desert region, having seen of living things only here and there in the distance the form of an Arab horseman, or the long neck of a camel moving among the rocks, when we beheld what appeared to be a cluster of ruinous dwellings, whose walls of white stone shone in the hot glances of the sun with a dazzling radiance. No tree or shrub was near to break the rays of the sun ; they stood undefended, and, as we supposed, uninhabited, in their fearful solitude. Ziba, thinking they might with reason be the resort of plunderers and robbers, who greatly infest the roads lying between Jerusalem, Jericho, and the borders of the Dead Sea, counselled that we should avoid them, by taking a course nearer the Jordan ; but curiosity prevailing over apprehension, we kept on our way, and with the less concern, that they stood on what must be the common road which travellers would take on their journeys to Machærus or Herodium. When we had drawn so near as to see the buildings more distinctly, with their white walls and dark shadows cast on the burning sand, and had paused a moment, there suddenly rushed from out the ruins lean and half-starved dogs, which filled the air with their prolonged and doleful howling ; fit guardians they seemed of the foul spirits that could alone inhabit dwellings more fearful and dismal than the tombs themselves. The dogs continuing their savage yells—yet, as they struck us, rather melancholy and mournful in their sound than fierce—we kept on our way, and drew still nearer, though it was with difficulty we urged on our horses, which seemed to dread an approach even more than ourselves. The walls showed here and there small loop-holes or windows, but the eye could see nothing but the deep blackness of space within. As I looked steadily at

one of these openings, a human face suddenly appeared, and was as quickly withdrawn; but, seen only for a moment, it made known, by its scaly death-like whiteness, who and what the inhabitants were. Here, I could not doubt, dwelt the leprous household of the brother of the Beth-Harem beggar. I called upon Ziba, who was hastening forward, to stop. At the same moment, passing a projecting wall, I there beheld the members of this miserable family lying basking in the rays of the sun, rather like swine than creatures in the human form. The dogs ceased their baying, and came round fawning as if for food. Soon as the lepers—lying, as it were, half asleep—were conscious of our presence, they cried out, as with one accord, in hoarse and unnatural tones, “Food, food—give us food,” at the same time stretching out their hands, from which some or all the fingers had fallen. “Food—give us food, else may the curse of leprosy cleave to you—may the air that blows over us taint you with the plague a thousand leagues over the desert.”

“Cease to curse,” said I, “and we will throw you food. But do you not fear to blaspheme, seeing what the punishment of your sins is?”

This they received with hoarse laughter.

“What should we fear? What is worse than this? Out upon you, hypocrite! Throw us food, or begone.”

“I would ask you,” I began.

“Insult us not; ask nothing; throw us food, I say, and begone.”

He who had said these things—his face at first white with its leprous crusts, but now bloated and red with impotent rage while he spoke—had half raised himself from the sand; he now seized a broken fragment of the wall to hurl at us; the others, at the same time, crying out to the dogs to attack us. Struck with horror at such a spectacle, we threw down the food we could spare, and fled upon our way—their

curses, and the baying of the famished dogs, dying gradually away as we rode.

It was a long while ere I could so banish from my mind the scene I had witnessed as to take note of the way. We rode along in silence. I could think only of the miserable fate that had overtaken a household reared once in prosperity and luxury. How low they must have fallen, I thought, in their sense of God and right, while yet the day of their prosperity shone bright, for adversity to plunge them so deep in beastliness and impiety. Their leprosy seemed but the least portion of the evil that had overtaken them; their bodies were in health and beauty compared with their souls.

"Doubtless they had forsaken God long before he suffered the punishment of their errors to fall upon them." So judged Ziba.

"Those wretches," continued he, "must have sinned with industry even from their birth, to bring down so fearful a judgment."

I told him what I had heard from the leper in Beth-Harem, and who I supposed them to be.

At this Ziba recollected himself, and said that "doubtless it was as I supposed. He had heard at Tyre of what I had related; and, as he had been told, it was rare that wickedness and impiety proceed to such excesses as in the younger of the two brothers. There were few in Tyre whom he had not injured. The wealth of the poor, of the widow, and the orphan, he had obtained as a trust, and then devoted to his pleasures and the luxurious indulgence of his household. His children grew up in sin. When he returned from India, he was well aware that when he entered his own doors, it was as a leper; but his heart was so hardened, that he said, They shall perish also. They did perish, indeed, by this living death. And the curse that had fallen from the hand of God clave unto him also, and cleaveth yet, and will cleave forever; for his soul is leprous more than the body,

and that shall be in the resurrection even as it is now—shall it not?”

I said that I could not but think so.

“Yet,” said Ziba, “the priests will tell us that the children of Abraham shall be saved, and their sins shall not hinder—while no others shall, be they never so pure.”

“But others,” I replied, “do not so judge; and these, perhaps, may know the truth as well as they.”

“I believe it,” answered Ziba. “The best that I have heard of the prophet on the Jordan—the Baptist—is, that to the boasting Pharisees and doctors from Jerusalem, who think, whether they fulfil all righteousness or not, they shall be saved, he said, ‘It is of no worth your claim on Abraham as your father, for God can raise up at any moment from the very stones of the street children to Abraham, who shall come in and claim all that belonged to his true descendants.’”

“If he has said so,” I answered, “he has said a good thing, and doubtless true as the righteousness of God.”

So conversing, we continued on our way, until, as we ascended a little knoll of sand, Ziba cried out, saying—“Behold! the Dead Sea!”

I looked where he pointed, and it was plainly to be seen stretching away to the south, till lost in the extreme distance.

“And there, on the left at the head of the lake,” continued Ziba, “can the eye just discern the high rocks on which stand the city and fortress we are in search of.”

They were indeed just visible; but as we moved on at a quicker pace, they rapidly emerged from the dimness in which they first appeared, and began to assume their proper forms. The same scene continued to surround us, save that the whole plain of the desert began to slope towards the huge basin of the sea, and the sand to become more light and soft,

and the low rocks to disappear. We now, too, had brought into sight the great highways from Idumea, winding round the head of the lake, and those from the northern parts of Peræa, all leading to Machærus, which, since its restoration by Herod the Great, has been not only a post of defence and repository for munitions of war, but likewise a place of resort for the merchants who trade between Arabia, Jerusalem, and Tyre, and the general coast of the Mediterranean. Along these main channels of communication we could now see horsemen, travellers on foot, and long lines of loaded camels, either bent towards Machærus or Herodium, or else going from these cities towards the west and north.

The Dead Sea now opened before me in all its grandeur and boundless extent. While the shore at the northern extremity, where the Jordan sends in its there dull and muddy stream, is but a vast waste of sand, all flat and low even to the water's edge, the eastern and western shores are, on the other hand, bold and sublime, with mountains of every wild and jagged form running down to the shore itself in lofty and abrupt precipices of bare and shattered rock, then retreating into the interior, and rising into loftier summits still. Between these ranges of hills lay the mysterious sea, heavy and motionless, as if indeed dead. No ripple broke its surface, no wave murmured along the shore, weltering only among the loose rocks piled along its margin: the silence as of death rested over it. The waters of this inland ocean, heavy with salt, their surface covered with an oily film which impedes the action of the winds, and being, moreover, without tides, strike the eye at once as different from all others—from those of the great sea, always in motion by reason of its tides, and from those of other lakes which, fresh and light, are curled by the gentlest breath of air that passes over them. Had this sea, instead of water, presented to the eye a surface of white polished silver, where every object on its sides

was reflected with the perfection of reality, it would not have differed from what I saw, nor filled the mind with more astonishment. When we drew near, and, impatient of delay, attempted in the most direct manner to reach the shore, we were instantly defeated by the soft and treacherous sands into which our horses sank. This compelled us to wind round the bay, which forms the upper extremity, that we might gain a rocky shore lying under a low cape or promontory that divided us from the city and fortress of Machærus.

Having accomplished our object, we stood upon the rocks against which the water lay, reached down and tasted for ourselves its exceeding bitterness, and looked into those clear depths which the eye penetrates as if they were composed of crystal. It demanded but slight effort of the fancy to make me believe that far down in those dismal solitudes I beheld the pinnacles and towers, the temples and the walls of the devoted cities; and that I could still hear, as the peasants affirm they ever do, the moaning or the imprecations of the wicked spirits there overwhelmed, and whom the justice of God still binds in their watery prisons. I lay along upon the rocks, and gazed and listened till I was weary, and I was roused by Ziba's voice saying that it was time we set on for Machærus, if we would reach that place before night.

LETTER XIII.

WAKENED from dreams in which I was losing myself, I saw that the reproof of the camel-driver was needed. We accordingly returned towards the path we had left, and moved on in the direction of the city.

The whole prospect to the east was now open to us, as we crossed a part of the promontory of which I have spoken. Machærus, the fortress, stood before us, crowning its inaccessible heights with tower and

wall ; the city, with which it is connected by fortified passages, stretching down the hill as it slopes gently to the north, and spreading out on each side beyond its embattlements into suburbs which spoke of both numbers and wealth. The prospect was wild and magnificent. The precipitous heights with trees and shrubs depending from the fissures in which they had fixed their roots, water from secret springs gushing forth, and falling from rock to rock, till it was lost in unfathomable gulfs below, all crowned with the stately buildings of the city in every form of Greek and Roman art, the fortress at the southern limit towering above the whole, and bidding defiance through its natural defences to the most proved resources of war, presented in their union a scene like no other which I had beheld before in either Europe or Asia. The beauty seemed to me the greater also for the features of dreary desolation that were so many and so appalling in almost every direction.

In the city above, and among the clefts of the rocks on which it stands, could the eye, pained as it had been by the barrenness of the desert and the shores and surface of the salt sea, now rest with an agreeable sense of relief upon the dark hues and heavy masses of this eastern foliage. Over the walls were to be seen the palm, the poplar, the sycamore, and the broad terebinth, shooting up and mingling their forms with those of the columns and pinnacles of Herod's temples and palaces. All that from such distance could be descried gave signs of a population not insensible to any of the provisions by which life is adorned at least, if not furnished with additional means of happiness ; and we pressed on our way, anxious, ere the sun should leave us, to pass the gates, and see more, and from a nearer point of view, of what filled us so with admiration.

As we went still farther to the north on our way towards the gate of the city, we fell in with many travellers taking the same road, and passed the

scattered dwellings of those who, as gardeners and husbandmen, supplied the wants of the citizens. A rich soil began now to show itself, from which the last products of the harvest were gathering. When we approached the gates, as our view was unobstructed to the east, and in the direction of Herodium, we beheld, as far as the eye could reach, valleys still smiling in a rich luxuriance of vegetation, sprinkled with villages and the insulated dwellings of the peasantry. Upon passing within the walls, we found the city of less extent than it had seemed when seen from the borders of the sea, but at the same time remarkable for the elegance and costliness of its structures, especially its public ones; for Herod the Great having rebuilt Machærus, he obeyed here, as he did wherever he undertook any work for the people, and for which their taxes were to pay, his passion for magnificence, and accordingly filled it with palaces, markets, temples, and porticos, as his humour inclined. The city in these features of it seems far beyond the demands of the region and of the inhabitants. These are of many nations; Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Arabians, as well as Jews and Samaritans, being found here, either as permanent citizens, or as strangers resorting hither for purposes of traffic.

We soon found our way to the merchant's house to whom Onias had commended me, who gave me a hospitable welcome to the city of Herod. Upon inquiring after the tetrarch, and in what way access was to be obtained, and whether he were at present in Machærus, I learned that he was now dwelling in the palace within the fortress, that he was easy of approach, and, moreover, was with impatience awaiting my arrival, of which Onias had given him warning.

When I had been refreshed by the sleep of a long night, and had satisfied my love of what is new and strange by examining different parts of the lower city, I turned towards the citadel, within which stands the palace of Herod. Although there are in the lower

city other palaces, costly and sumptuous, which he also occupies when his inclinations prompt, yet for the most part, as I have learned, he confines himself to this within the fortress. This place is reached only at one point, and by one passage, which is a bridge, covered by an arch, and more like a subterranean tunnel than a bridge, thrown across a deep gulf that separates one part of this mountain from another. On the smaller part stands the fortress of Machærus, entered in the way I have described. On every other side it is wholly inaccessible, since the precipices which nature has reared are impossible of ascent, and superadded to them, are the lofty walls and towers, a hundred cubits and more in height, rebuilt by the great Herod, when they had been demolished by the Romans in their conflicts with Aristobulus. Only, it must be said, that the structures of Herod are greatly inferior in both extent and strength to those that had before been built by our King Alexander.

When I had passed the huge gateways at either extremity of the bridge, both of which were guarded by soldiers, I entered the space inclosed by the walls of the citadel, in the centre of which rose before me the palace of the tetrarch, magnificent in its vastness, and beautiful by reason of the multitude of its polished columns, its lofty porticos, and the richness of its various decorations. Before it, and surrounding it on all sides, were groves of every fruit tree and flowering plant brought from all parts of the world. No tree could, I believe, be named, in any way remarkable, distinguished either for its beauty of form, or the flavour of its fruit, or the odour of its blossoms, that might not be found here. In all directions also, fountains of water were throwing up to a great height their refreshing showers or columns. Large ranges of other buildings, designed for the chief officers of the king, for all such as choose to resort to his court, as well as for the large garrison which is always maintained here, were seen in different parts of this large

inclosure, seeming almost for extent like those I had left on the other side of the bridge. The scene was made to appear full of life also, from the movement of troops of soldiers on the walls or the platforms beneath to the sound of their warlike instruments, and from the numbers of those who appeared to be visitors of the king, and who were walking among the trees, or reposing by the side of the fountains. A busy multitude also of slaves were labouring at their different employments, in preserving in their order the grounds and the buildings, or performing the errands committed to them. .

I was led to that part of the palace where were situated the private apartments of the tetrarch, to the room in which he receives those with whom he has any affairs to transact that are to be conducted with privacy. Herod was sitting with writing materials before him as I entered. In his appearance, he conformed to what I had looked for; he was not above the middle stature, nor in other respects possessed of any of those remarkable qualities by which the eye is either captivated or awed at once; his countenance easily relaxes into a smile, yet in the smile there is more of a certain sort of derision or secret contempt, than of anything like mirthfulness or goodwill; his eyes are those of a Jew, quick in their motion, and suddenly, and without apparent cause, averted from you as you meet their glance; his beard and hair of a reddish hue, not long, but thick and straight; his garments, of the richest stuffs, were such as become a monarch; his voice is for the most part soft and cheerful; yet often, and unconsciously, as it were, sliding into other tones harsh and imperious, as if they were those most natural. He rose and saluted me with courtesy, using the Latin tongue, which he speaks with readiness and exactness, but rather as if he had learned it of masters, than by much use among those to whom it is a native speech. He asked after the welfare of Onias and his house-

hold, expressing much regard for him, and great reliance upon his judgment and valour. He then spake of my journey, and of my arrival, and asked if I had before visited these regions.

I answered that I had never, until within a short period, seen any part of the country of my forefathers, nor until now the Dead Sea and the city of Machærus. I spoke of the wonders of the place, and of the magnificence of his father, to whom it owed its existence.

"Yes," he said, "Herod was a great man; but it had been better for Israel had he been great as a Jew, rather than as a man and a king. He was a Roman or a Greek, not a true son of Abraham."

"It was very true," I said; "and it was the more a matter of rejoicing that his son in that departed from the example of the parent, and was a lover of his own country and people, and their customs, yet without a deadly hatred of others. The people were now in expectation that through him their ancient greatness might be restored."

"It is my glory," he replied, "to be, and to be called a Jew, a lover of the law, and an observer of its commands. The people of Galilee and Peræa know me only as a Jew. If I am ever king of Israel—I shall be king of Israel."

I said that I could not doubt that he would be, yet it rested with himself.

"Young man," said he, "you speak well and boldly. Onias has commended thee to me. But for his word, which is sure as the roots of these hills, I should not talk with thee thus; but I now speak with thee even as I should with him."

I said that he might do so with safety; I was now wholly a Jew, and so far desirous of the independence and liberty of my country, that I stood ready and waiting to join any enterprise that promised, through its extent and well concerted plans, the success that ought to crown it.

"Thy countenance and thy voice give me assurance," said Herod, "of trust-worthiness. But what set thee about that mad outbreak in Cæsarea? Thy present speech agrees not with that. Pilate was too strong for thee. It would have gone ill with thee, as well as Philip, but for Onias. I should hardly else have seen thee here in Machærus."

The possibility of such mischance seemed to amuse him. I then related to him minutely how it fell out there, and how it was by an accident alone that I had been involved in the enterprise.

"Ah! now again," said Herod, "you seem the same person who first spoke. I see what swayed thee, friendship and love, not the sacred passion for thy country, of which the occasion was not worthy. The great God of Israel, the God of Moses and of Abraham, of David and the Maccabees, is to be worshipped and served only in honourable undertakings, agreeing in their greatness with his majesty."

In saying these words, the manner of the king changed, and I could see in him without difficulty one not unworthy to reign over Israel. He rose and continued with energy: "Unhappy Israel! when shall her sorrows cease, her oppressions end, her tears be wiped away from her eyes? All the nations of the earth have taken their fill in the slaughter of her children, and carrying them away into captivity. The king of Babylon, and the king of Syria, have in turn laid her waste. But as truly as God did bring about a return from the captivity, and a deliverance from the great Antiochus, so surely will he accomplish a greater redemption still, from a greater thralldom, by the hand of the least of his servants. Rome shall yet know that there is a greater than herself; Judea shall yet know that her redeemer liveth; the multitude of the people shall yet rejoice in her salvation. Unto me, Julian, unto me is committed this office, and to the least iota shall its duties be fulfilled."

"I believe it," I answered; "with all Israel as one man at thy back, thou canst not fail. But Israel is divided. How shall she be brought together in one faith and one submission?"

"That is the work," replied the tetrarch, "we have to do. Ere one step in action can be taken, the mind and heart of the people must be assailed and converted. Already, Julian, has this been done beyond thy knowledge or belief. Emissaries, secret, and partners as it were of my own bosom, have gone out hence into every corner of the land, learning who were to be trusted, and to them confiding the purposes we cherish. The Herodians, ever lovers of our house, are with us; they will be divided from Rome whom they now affect, but, as they perceive, in seeming only, to be more than rewarded for all they may lose in a future Rome here in Judea. In that new Rome, that new and more glorious kingdom, they shall have free indulgence in the customs they approve. The redeemed Jew shall be bound by no chains of a new slavery. Dost thou understand?"

I did not understand the glance with which he accompanied those words.

"The law will then," I replied, "surely be supreme; it will be raised to new honour and a wider dominion; it will be the everlasting foundation on which we shall stand."

"Oh surely, surely," he answered; "the law will be supreme. It is for that we war, for that we dare all, for that we put in jeopardy our lives, and our children, and our wealth. But—but enough of this for once, young Roman. Let us break away from a theme so grave, and look abroad upon the wonders of a place as yet so new to thee."

Thus saying, he directed me to accompany him to other parts of the palace and of the fortress, and he would display to me its resources. This I was by no means unwilling to do; so we left the apartment.

After we had surveyed the splendours of the palace

—the halls, the banqueting rooms, the chambers, the marble roofs, the carved ceilings of cedar of Lebanon, the columns and the porticos—we turned to the huge walls of this great prison house, that, by ascending them, and still more the lofty towers that shoot up from them at regular intervals, we might obtain a prospect of the region round about. We soon, though only after a wearisome ascent, stood on the top of the topmost tower, whence the eye looked abroad as far as it is in the power of the eye to penetrate, no object coming between it and the utmost verge of the horizon. We looked in silence for a space upon the broad land of Judea lying before us in its luxuriance, yet in its slavery.

“All that we now see,” cried Herod, pointing to the four quarters of the heavens, “shall yet be mine; by my arm shall Jehovah get the victory; upon me is his spirit and his power poured out; this my soul knoweth; and by me shall be filled the throne of David. Have faith in this, Julian, and thou shalt sit on the right hand of my power when I shall have obtained the kingdom.”

I said that the reward of having served Israel according to my strength was all that I coveted.

“Nevertheless,” said the tetrarch, “more shall be added. He that worketh for love shall reap the best reward, the reward that love alone can give; but he shall not lose what cometh of the world’s honour. Let us now descend.”

We then descended; but when we had reached the bottom of the tower, in place of passing out by the door through which we had entered, Herod took a contrary direction, and beckoned to me to follow him, and again to descend still further; so we began to descend lower and lower, until, as it seemed, we must have reached the roots of the mountain, and the fountains of the great springs; but at length we paused, and drawing the bolts of a door, we entered a vast hall perfectly finished after the rules of art,

lighted, but whence I saw not, and filled with all the various munitions of war. It was an armory of weapons of every kind known to the arts of modern warfare, all of the most perfect workmanship, and arranged each kind by itself in the most exact order. I was filled with amazement at such displays of power ; but it was increased when, from this apartment, I was led into another, and still another of equal dimensions, and all in like manner stored with the implements of death, with harness for men, and horses, and elephants. I gave utterance to the wonder which I could not repress, and asked, " Why is all this, and whence ? "

" Thanks to the providence of the great God of Israel," replied the tetrarch, " his servant has been led to lay aside from the uses of luxury and a vain show wherewith to heap together these treasures, richer than stores of gold, and kept against the day of the Lord, that great day when Israel shall arise and shake off her oppressors. Herod the Great built cities, and palaces, and strongholds ; Herod Antipas hath filled them with both men and arms. It is not, thou seest, without a show of right, Julian, that he asks thy confidence and allegiance."

I said that I confessed his greatness.

We then left the armories, and again ascended, but only a part of the way, when Herod, by a door opening towards another quarter, entered an apartment lighted by windows pierced through the walls of the rock, and filled with vessels, in which were deposited coin and jewels of immense value. " Here," said my conductor, " dost thou behold the secrets of the power that shall be displayed in Israel. Let but the children of Israel come up to their tents as of old, when the Philistine was in the land, and there shall not be wanting any other of the instruments of successful warfare. Think not, moreover, that thou hast now seen the whole of Herod's power. At Herodium, at Tiberias, at Sepphoris, are there magazines not less well supplied than these thou hast seen here. We

wait but for the day and the hour, which the Lord hath put in his own hand."

We returned to the courts around the palace. I was there shown the huge reservoirs of water prepared for the subsistence of those who should be besieged, the granaries for the necessary supplies of food, and all the various stores in secret chambers within the body of the outward walls, of missiles of every kind, as well as the most combustible substances for the annoyance and destruction of the assailants; so that when I had seen all, it seemed to me a place now wholly impregnable; to be subdued only, if at all, by years of patient waiting and watching, until the food within should be consumed, or pestilence do the work of the sword.

When we had ended this survey of a thousand wonders, we re-entered the apartment whence we had departed, where Herod informed me that I was no longer the guest of the merchant, but his own; and that Chuza, the steward of the household, would conduct me to the part of the palace provided for me.

As I sat within the apartment thus made ready for me, in that part of the palace where, the walls of the fortress sinking with the form of the ground, the eye could freely wander over the whole adjacent country and the streets of the lower city, I could not but marvel at the strange position in which I found myself, and the course that seemed now plainly to be marked out before me. I could from my windows survey the distant valley of the Jordan, and the verdant slopes of Moab, together with the sandy deserts that we had traversed. This desert, said I to myself—and I say it to thee also my mother—as it is the emblem of what thou hast been so many years, Judea, so these luxuriant valleys, smiling in plenty and in peace, are the type of what thou shalt be. I have found him who, if God withhold not his favour, shall accomplish thy deliverance, and save thee out of the hands of thy enemies.

It is from this watch-tower, my mother, that I write these things, and overlooking these objects so full of interest to a lover of his country. Herod loads me with favours. But although I have been here many days, he hath conversed only of such things as have been common to all. The palace is thronged with those—strangers from all countries, as well as his own family and friends—with whom he must divide his hours, and it is chiefly at the table in the sumptuous banqueting-room that I have met him since my first interview. There he has been surrounded by his great officers, his ministers, the chief citizens and lords of Machærus and the Peræa, as well as strangers, and hath been in a manner inaccessible. I have observed in him, in whatever relation I have seen him, only the bearing that becomes a monarch. The daughter of Aretas, Fatnah, remains still in Tiberias; while Joanna, the wife of the steward, and chief officer under Herod, performs the duties that had otherwise fallen to her. Of her I know nothing but that she is a devout woman, and in great esteem among our people.

Ziba brings me intelligence, such as he gathers among the servants and soldiers of the palace, that Fatnah will no more reign in Machærus. They speak openly, he says, of the king's love of Herodias, and that he will yet bring about what he has proposed to himself; but that in such case war will ensue between him and the Arabian king.

Yet of these things I have heard from no other. No credible reports of them have come to my ear through any of the guests, nor through any of the rulers of the synagogues.

I have again conversed with Herod upon those matters which brought me to Machærus. He seems like one who, using caution where he intends to bestow confidence, has waited to observe and know me under the ordinary circumstances of every day, ere he would intrust to me further what concerns so im-

mediately the welfare of himself and kingdom. It was in the most secret apartments of the palace that he again required my presence.

"Julian," said he, "I at first showed thee my willingness to confide in thee, because thou camest to me from Onias. For thy uncle's sake I put my trust in thee, and made to thee revelations such as have been made to few so young in the knowledge I have had of them. I have now seen thee for myself, and from this time, for thine own sake, nothing is withheld, if it be that thy purposes still continue as they were."

I told him that nothing had happened to change them; I waited but to know all he would impart; whatever should be committed to me I would perform.

He then gave me, with minuteness, an account of all that had hitherto been done in Judea, of the persons associated with him, and the forces of every kind that would be at their command; of the obstacles yet lying in the way, and the services required of those who engaged in his affairs.

"Of thee, Julian," said he, "we desire services in Jerusalem, Cæsarea, and Rome. Monies are to be raised. Notwithstanding what thou hast seen, it is but as a tithe of what the all-devouring jaws of war will consume. The faithful at Rome, where they are powerful both for numbers and their great wealth, are to be approached by a skilful messenger, that they may be wrought upon to contribute of their riches, although they should refuse to serve in our armies; and in truth we can spare them from our ranks, so they will but impart freely of that which is better. Whom so well could we depute upon this great errand as thyself? Moreover, communications by word of mouth are yet to be had with Sejanus, with whom we are bound in league; in this thou canst serve us. At what time Sejanus rises in Rome, and takes the crown of Tiberius, Herod rises in Judea and sits upon the throne of Israel. But what, then,

Julian? Is Judea to be then bound to Sejanus as now to Tiberius? So thinks Sejanus; and thus the league stands—that when the armies of Tiberius are here defeated, as in Italy and the West, the East shall still through me be his. But so will not the league be kept. Judea once her own, the armies of Rome and of apostate Jews once defeated, Israel then reigns in her own right; her new kingdom is come, and it shall never pass away. Who sees not, that can see at all, how all things conspire together to this great consummation? Does Herod serve but as the tool of the Roman? Let the Roman look to it—let him look to it. He shall see betimes who serves as tool of the other.”

The quick twinkling eye of the tetrarch expressed inward satisfaction, and he smiled as the picture he drew rose before him. Although, as in every bosom, there was in mine a loathing of deceit, yet who was to be deceived? and what and to whom was to be the profiting? It was but to be a deceiving of the great deceiver himself, and that to win life and liberty, a home and a kingdom for the Israelite, long a wanderer or a slave on his own soil. The scheme, as I gazed upon it, grew into honour and beauty, as it was in its craft undoubtedly auspicious of success.

I therefore, as Herod ceased, commended what he had said, and engaged on my part to further his plans, as he should desire, in Rome, Jerusalem, or Cæsarea.

“There lieth now in our way then,” continued the tetrarch, “but one obstacle.”

He paused.

I asked, “and what is that?”

“John the Baptist,” he answered with bitterness; “that wild man of the woods.”

“I see in him no harm,” I answered; “he seems, indeed, not only to be harmless, but even a just man.”

“That is it—that is it,” replied the tetrarch; “the

people honour him, and he cannot, therefore, be touched so well. But he distracts their minds, and draws them away from where they are by us to be directed and kept. It is reported he even setteth up for Christ; at least the people are full of wonderings and doubts, and many believe he will so prove himself, in the face of all present appearances to the contrary."

"But," I replied, "he has strictly denied that he is Christ, and claims only to be a prophet. Besides, the people seeing none of the marks of the Christ in his manner of life or acts, will soon forsake him."

"It seemeth not so as yet, and it is now since the tabernacles that he hath led about the people, preaching sedition. He must be silenced."

"Let him be seized by thy power," I replied, "and I fear the issue would be disastrous rather than helpful to our cause. It would turn against thee the affections of multitudes who now throng him and believe in him. Let him alone, and though he may instruct or amuse the people, of what injury to us can be his baptisms of water in the Jordan? It is but so much water gathered up and poured out again."

"That may be," replied the king; "but there is more in John than his baptisms, which, as thou sayest, are but so much water of the Jordan caught up and poured into the stream again. He preacheth, and preacheth sedition among my people; he hath intermeddled with my affairs. Were it not for the people, his idiot, wonder-loving worshippers, his head had ere this graced our palace gates."

I knew well that in what he said Herod now referred to Herodias, and to John's accusations on that account. It was plain that the rumours were well founded, else why the anger of the tetrarch and his language? In what I myself condemned I could not be silent, and though I more than doubted the issue, I resolved to do what in me lay to draw the king away from a purpose that, as I firmly believed, would blast

all the hopes he was cherishing, and so many with him.

"And doth not John the Baptist counsel well, O king? If he intermeddleth in thy affairs, it is to save thee. Thou canst not marry Herodias without guilt in the eye of the law; without ruin to thy cause."

"Thou art over bold, young man," said Herod starting, his countenance changing with passion; "it was not for this I placed my confidence in thee. Beware the chafed lion."

"If I see thee, Herod, about to fall from a precipice, am I in fault to hold thee back? I say again—and I fear thee not—to put away thy wife for Herodias is folly, and guilt, and ruin. Have I not just pledged myself to thy cause? Am I not then invested with some rights? Shall I stand idly by and see thee destroy not only thyself, but me, my friends, and my country's hope?"

"Say on, young man; say on," said the tetrarch; "thou art bold, but I can honour courage."

"I have no more to say," I answered, "than to beseech the king, as he loves his cause and his country, to refrain from that to which he hath put his hand."

"But," said Herod, suddenly calm again, "I am bound; it cannot be; my word is plighted."

"Bind thyself to the right, O king, though in so doing thou shouldst break thy word. Thou canst in nothing be true, being false to God. Why shouldst thou covet this divorce? Is not thy Fatnah the daughter of a king?"

"She is an Arabian. The wife of the king of Israel should be a Jewess."

"A Jewess, rightly considered, is one who feareth God and worketh his will, not who was born of Jewish parents. Is she not virtuous and fair?"

"Ay, and weak. Herodias is the great Herod in female form. With her—and I were doubly armed."

"As we hear, Fatnah is full of kindly virtues—a mother to her people."

"But she is barren."

"Yet were Herodias fruitful as the vines of Judea, the sin would be but the more; she is thy brother's wife."

The face of Herod again swelled with passion, as if he could bear no more, but he suppressed it.

"Young Roman, he is no brother of mine; I swear it."

"Is not Philip of Jerusalem thy father's son, son of the great Herod?"

"But yet no brother of mine, for else were half the men of Jerusalem, nay, of Judea, methinks, my brothers. I can choose nowhere without incest. This is no kindred in the sight of God or man."

"It stands so," I answered, "in the law and in the Jewish courts."

"In the letter of the law it may be," he answered, "but not in its spirit; and for the Jewish courts, they are beds of rottenness, and schools but of fraud and cunning. So too, if, as thou wilt doubtless further urge, Herodias be the daughter of Aristobulus, and so my brother's daughter, I reply again, I own him not. He was no brother of mine. Archelaus was indeed my brother, Olympias is indeed my sister, children of Malthace as well as of Herod; but beyond them, I know no brother, no sister, or else wert thou perhaps a brother, and Joanna, Chuza's wife, a sister."

"Think not, O king," I replied, "to rest in reasons such as these. They are but gilded toys that amuse thy mind awhile, and perhaps may dazzle the minds of others for a time, but they are of no solid worth, and the eye and the mind will soon see them as they are. The people of our land, if in many things they are corrupt, if they honour not the law of Moses as they ought, yet they revere in some sort the great law of justice written by the finger of God on the heart, before which the high and the low are alike arraigned, and will be judged in the great day; and so it is not, O king, the voice of John alone that con-

demns and accuses, it is the voice of the people, and so the voice of God. They behold thee about to commit injustice and folly in Israel, and their tongues rebuke thee, and those the more who are building on thee their hope of redemption. Can they think that he who abuses a lesser power shall safely be intrusted with a greater? Shall not righteousness become the anointed of the Lord? Shall any other rule in His name? Thou trustest, Herod, even that thou shalt be hailed the Christ of God, and thou knowest that many now do hold thee so; but shall that faith abide? For in his Messiah the Jew looks not merely for the son of David, but the Son of God; not only for the king, but the priest and prophet also; for the sovereign, but for the reformer, not less, of his fallen country. Thou art tearing that faith violently out of the hearts of those in whom it was taking root. I, even I, have deemed that upon thee God was now about to lay his honour; that in thee the new kingdom should take its beginning; that though thou be not indeed the expected Messiah, thou art his forerunner, and he by whom the way is to be prepared for the establishment of the reign that is to be eternal. Destroy not the hopes thus raised in so many hearts, for whose fulfilment there has been so long tarrying. Leave us our faith. Abandon not those who gather together beneath thy standards. We are ready and waiting at thy chariot wheels to bear thee on to victory. Send us not away empty and despairing."

While I said these and many other things, not knowing what might befall, the countenance of the king waxed pale and red by turns, and his frame trembled. When I had ceased, he said, with a voice scarce articulate through the raging of inward passion, "I swear by the soul of my father, young Jew, that I have now a mind to see thee hurled from the topmost tower of Machærus a thousand fathoms into the gulfs below. Am I a king to be thus bearded by a boy? Thou standest there immovable and undaunted,

as though thou wert the king and I an arraigned malefactor. Who art thou? Mayhap thou art the Christ, or else Elias?"

So greatly was Herod transported by his passion, and withal a sort of terror, that in these last words he seemed as much in earnest as in derision. He hastily walked backward and forward, as if wavering in his mind, and resolving with difficulty.

At length he paused before me again, his countenance now calmer, but with a language spread over it which I could not read.

"Young Jew, I am willing to believe thou hast spoke the truth."

"I am sure," I answered with force, "of nothing so much."

"Wouldst thou repeat it?" cried the tetrarch with returning passion.

"If it would help thee or Judea, I would repeat it a hundred times."

"Thou art like the face of the Dead Sea; no raging moves thee. But of this no more. Listen. I am sure now that thou art honest and true. There lives not the man who else had dared to thrust himself as thou hast done into the lion's den. I can now trust thee for a friend of Israel, whom no fear of peril or death shall turn aside from the true path that leads to her honour. There is no place of glory or of power to which thou mayst not aspire. I have for thee the witness of Onias and thine own. But one thing I have now found, that thou hast eyes before and behind, and canst penetrate the dark; let there be then no deceit betwixt me and thee. Touching the wife of Philip of Jerusalem, I believe thou hast spoke in part the truth. I see the weight of thy reasons, and I shall honour and keep the law—as thou construest the law—whilst the occasion demands. Till the battle is gained, there shall be no Jew so observant of the law as I. The liberty of Israel shall not suffer harm through me; my loves and my hates shall alike sub-

mit themselves to her interests. Surely in this I show myself a Jew as devout as any Pharisee in Jerusalem. What thinkest thou?"

I said that in yielding so much he did well, and I doubted not that he would in the end fully keep the law.

"Think no such thing, young man," replied the king. "Let there be no deceit, I say, between me and thee. Give not up thy own judgment; thy last words show thee halting. Mayhap thou still conceivest hopes of me as of the anointed of God?"

"Nay, not so far as that: they are vanished."

"Thou wast then a fool with the rest in Israel?"

"I was in doubt: I was ignorant. But I doubt no longer: now I know."

"And yet, Jew, why now so confident on the other side? Who shall fathom the purposes of the most high God? of him who holds the universe in the hollow of his hands, who sees of all enterprises the end from the beginning, and can accomplish the mightiest plans by the humblest and the basest instruments? Verily, if thou art sure, son of Alexander, that I am not the Christ, thou art surer than I. The people think me so. They call on me to arise, and appear! Secret messengers arrive from all parts of the land, and hail me king of Israel! Son of God! the long-looked-for Messiah! I have not been to them—they have come to me. What is the spirit that moves them? May it not be the spirit of Jehovah? Who can say? When such things have been, and I have turned back into myself and mused, have thought of my present power, and the sure grasp I now may lay on the Roman greatness here in Israel, crushing it as a sea-bird's egg, and the future has thus risen before me, it hath truly seemed as if God were in very deed working with me. Visions have come and gone; there have been inward promptings and impulses, and influxes of celestial light, that have been as the voice of God calling on me to arise,

and make haste, and tarry not, for the great redemption was drawing nigh, and by my hand was it to be wrought out. Who can say more than this? And who shall dare to say that I am not the Redeemer of Israel?"

Herod now seemed another being; his voice became plaintive and reverent; his countenance opened with expressions of generosity and faith. He seemed like one who was no trifier or cajoler, but a true believer in his own words; as if he were in no respect the same person who had said what had gone before. But in a moment longer, when the sudden flame had died away, he sank down again into his more proper self, and I beheld only the tetrarch of Galilee, powerful, shrewd, and dangerous.

Suddenly turning to me, he then added, "Julian, from this day we are friends. My heart is known to thee, and thine to me. To others we are as we may be. Let us go on together in peace in the great work set for us to do. Let all else be forgot but the one common aim and end—the overthrow of Rome, and the glory of Israel. Leave me to do with the people as I may. What fancies soever concerning me they may have, let them have them; and they may be more than fancies—God knoweth, not man."

I said that I was bound to him, and would serve him. There was a darkness which at present I could not penetrate; but I should wait for light to fall upon it from the great source of light.

We then conversed of the present condition of affairs in Peræa, in Galilee, and Judea; of the measures next to be pursued, and of those fittest to undertake them.

While we thus conversed, it was told to Herod that some one required to see him. Chuza then entered, saying that Onias had arrived, and desired to see both him and Julian of Rome.

"He is welcome," cried the king; "let him approach."

Onias in a few moments more was with us.

"Welcome, prince of the Jordan," cried Herod, as the noble form of Onias appeared; "welcome to Machærus. Let it not be an offence if I say, that thy kinsman here hath for a season blotted thee out of our thoughts."

"I am happy," replied Onias, "whenever a worthier is found for one less so."

"Not a worthier, Onias," rejoined the king, "only a newer. The new has an early worth, that for a season outshines all other; but it is not trusted, nor does it last, as the old. Thou, Onias, art old wine from the vats of Herod in Cæsarea; thy kinsman, Julian, but the squeezings, rich and rare, of the last vintage. This minds me—how went the vintage with thee on the Jordan, Onias?"

"The presses could scarce do the work," he replied, "the vines made for them; they bent, even to breaking, with their heavy burdens."

"And the vine of vines," continued the king, "that clings round thee—thy fair daughter Judith; how fares the damsel?"

"She is well," briefly answered Onias.

"But favours not the royal cause?" rejoined the king.

"Only as of old."

"Ah, she is fond of dreams, like youth," said Herod. "I warrant John Baptist takes her fancy. But what, Onias, of John? where resorts he now?"

"He is now," replied Onias, "in the wilderness of Jordan, nigh unto Bethabara, where many, as I learn, are still gathered to his baptism. I passed on my way through the village, but he with his followers were withdrawn into the deep valleys among the neighbouring hills."

So, on these and the like themes, we for a while conversed.

Wholly unexpected as was the appearance of Onias, I was yet rejoiced to see him. I felt that I needed

some one to whom to turn for counsel in the position in which I found myself; and thy brother, although himself almost a stranger, seemed now, and here where I stood alone, like a parent. When our first interview with Herod was over, and he had dismissed us until the hour of supper, it was with a sense of relief not easy to imagine that I imparted to him such of my difficulties and doubts as, without treachery to the tetrarch, I was still at liberty to speak of: I was happy in obtaining his approval in what I had done, and in what I had promised. He himself I found more than ever elated with the prospect that was now opened of immediate and prosperous action. His fervent and holy zeal rekindled what of mine had begun to grow cold; so that after even a brief communion with him, I also was impatient that our affairs should be brought to a speedy issue.

Herod having constrained us, we have passed many days within his palace and city; but they have been days of busy care in the things which chiefly concerns us. Messengers have arrived, and letters from those in the confidence of the tetrarch, and have been despatched in return, whose object is in a great part to infuse everywhere that leaven which shall work in the hearts of those where it hath been deposited, and from them still spread, till it shall raise all to one pitch of devotion to God, and the birth and growth of his kingdom.

In the leisure that has here fallen to my share, I have traversed the shores of the Dead Sea in the immediate neighbourhood of Machærus, and surveyed on all sides the wonderful position of this impregnable fortress. Nature herself has made it almost perfect in its security, and art has more than added what was left incomplete. Nature, too, has supplied what, in a region so abounding in rock and sand, she generally denies, copious fountains of water springing up among the deep fissures. And as if designing it for the abode of those whom she greatly favoured, there wells up

not only water, cold and pure as the springs of Lebanon, but that which is both hot and medicinal also. Boiling springs shoot up in many places, and pour over the rocks into basins below—sometimes natural, and sometimes wrought by art—their healing waters ; to which there resort constantly, not only from Machærus, but from Herodium and the country round about, multitudes of the diseased to try their virtues. Everywhere among these deep and rocky chasms are there signs of heat in the waters which thus rise to the surface, as if driven upward by subterranean forces, and in the smoke which oozes everywhere from out the soil—ascending, we may believe, from the flaming caverns where the ancient cities of idolatry lie engulfed, whose inhabitants, while some are drowned in floods of water, others are buried in lakes of eternal fire, ever burning, yet ever unconsumed.

Many being now at Machærus from all parts of Judea, who are secretly joined with Herod in his plans, he has given a banquet, to which those were invited only to whom he has declared himself more fully. This feast was held, not in the banqueting room of which I have already spoken, but in one in a less public part of the palace, within the fortress, separated by other buildings and lofty walls from the sight and hearing of all save those who are specially permitted to approach.

This room is vast, and of those dark Egyptian forms which, notwithstanding their beauty, do also carry with them a sort of terror, with which they fail not to impress the mind of the beholder ; so is it seen in the temple of Isis, not far from the Forum of Augustus, both in its outward, but especially in the gloomy shapes of its interior decorations. Here the dark hue of the stone of which the columns were wrought could scarce be changed to a cheerful brightness, though the glare of innumerable lamps was cast upon them. The flames of the lamps themselves, the

only source of what was bright, poured forth from the hissing jaws of fiery serpents; or else in wreaths played around the sad faces of the melancholy sphinx. From the table, indeed, while the eye rested upon it, there shot up a splendour which could hardly be borne, from the polished surface of innumerable vessels of silver and gold, from pitchers of glass charged to the brim with wines of every hue, which gave back the light again in dazzling brilliance, as from crystal itself, and from the robes of the guests, gorgeous in their colour and forms, woven of gold or silver thread, and thick set with all the jewellery of the Orient. Herod himself seemed hardly to belong to the same race with those around him, so transformed did he seem by reason of the imperial magnificence of the shining tissues in which he was arrayed, and the glittering crown that adorned his head; not less, too, did he seem to differ from others by the greatness of his bearing, which was more than that of a man or a king, and by which those who were present confessed themselves awed or oppressed. There was no rude clamour or noisy mirth, as is customary when men assemble to enjoy the hour. The luxuries came and went untasted, or were eaten sparingly. They who conversed spoke in tones scarcely audible; not in those of grief, but of deepest earnestness. We were as a company of persons too grave from the greatness of the thoughts that were in each heart, to be seduced to any wantonness by the enticements of the inviting board; for each who sat at its side was a Jew, who came there burdened with the care of his country's deliverance, and knowing that now the final pledge was to be given and received of loyal devotion to her cause, and to him to whom, as chief, they had consented to intrust its conduct. The signs of deep thought and anxious musing were on the dark faces of my countrymen, whom, but for the mockery, as it seemed, of their brilliant garments, and the surrounding glare, one might have taken for a secret assembly of assassins.

The music, too, that poured in upon us its harmonies, seemed, in its wailing notes or sepulchral tones, to be a strange contradiction to the purpose for which we were gathered together, and as if prophesying against us. It was not easy to shake one's spirit free from the power which accidents were thus disposed to exercise over it; doubts and apprehensions arose out of mere shadows, at which it was easier to force a smile than to dismiss them from the mind.

The feast, I need not say, was therefore brief; that the design of which was to give pleasure alone, was the only thing that gave discomfort or pain; for when the attending servants of the banquet were withdrawn, and the sound of the music was hushed, and each one gave utterance to the real feelings that were within, then, indeed, a change came over the countenances of those who sat there. Alone, and each was gloomy and despondent; but when we were one, by each sharing the sentiments of the other, all were alike cheerful and confiding. Many, obtaining the ear of the whole assembly, did not fail to increase the ardour of those who listened, by the reasons which they urged for the enterprise at the present moment, and against an increased delay. And what chance of failure would there be, they urged, with a chief whose providence had supplied, while others had slept, arms and harness for every Israelite who would use them, and by his league with the aspiring Sejanus, had secured the aid of Rome herself in the work of her own destruction!

But the passions of all were inflamed to the highest pitch as Herod himself, when he had listened in silence to what had been said by others, arose and defended the cause in which he had engaged, showed from the Scriptures the fitness of the time for the deliverance for which all were looking, related the steps which by him alone, and without concert, had been taken, and laid open before all an exact enumeration of the stores of every kind of armament he had heaped together in cities and fortresses which he named, de-

scribed the number of those—principal Jews in every part of Palestine—who were already bound to him, and the measures to be adopted for securing the aid of the Israelites of Rome, and those dwelling in the other cities of Asia and Europe. What Jew was there, he asked, whether of Judea, Galilee, or Peræa, or even Samaria, who, however providence might have cast his lot, would not add of his substance to the treasury of the Lord; would not clamour to be permitted to put forth his strength to rescue Jerusalem, the city of the great king, from the pollution of the Gentile? Many times had Jerusalem suffered from the oppressor, many times had Israel been beneath the feet of the conqueror, but never had her captivity been such as now. For now there were those even who are pleased with their slavery, who cherish this union, though of dependence, with the mistress of the earth, who are losing the character of the Jew in that of the Roman, who, like our ancestors of old, are joining themselves to idols. Who knows not that our very taxes are gathered by Jewish hands, to be paid into the Gentile's treasury? In Babylon we mixed not with the blood of the conqueror, nor joined his rites, nor followed his customs, nor ever gloried in our shame. In Egypt we remained a people distinct and peculiar, and as we entered it, so we departed from it, the likeness of the twelve patriarchs seen in all the thousands of their descendants. Now we are falling each day more and more into the mass of all-ingulfing Rome, where, like so many other nations, we too shall be swallowed up and lost. What captivity was ever to be compared with this? And what though it was to his own ancestors—to whom so much as Herod the Great—that this apostacy was to be traced for its beginning? What though he himself had joined hand in hand with the great iniquity? what though the sect among the people that bore his name was a Roman party? these were but the more urgent reasons for immediate action, that, before it was too

late, and the spirit of the nation utterly dead, their remaining strength might be put forth for its salvation. The time was now come, he was assured as from God himself, the hour was now arrived, he knew it by the spirit of prophecy, that the hopes of this great people were to be fulfilled. The weeks of Daniel the prophet were numbered ; the sceptre had departed from Israel—Rome wields it—and the lawgiver from between her feet, and the day when Shiloh should appear had dawned. It is the event that shall seal the prophecy, the deed done that shall show the prophet. Our care is to redeem Israel. That being done, our sight will be clear to know her king in her redeemer, and greet him as rightful head of a kingdom who hath saved it ; a kingdom of which there shall be no end, whose boundaries shall be those of the whole world.

As Herod ceased, and even before he ceased, loud cries of exultation broke from those who, as the tetrarch had spoken, had gathered round him. "Herod," said some, "is the Christ we need." "All things show Herod to be the true Messiah," said others ; "many times have we been deceived, but now we are sure." "Israel redeemed from captivity will show us who is the Christ." "Do not all proofs and signs point to Herod?" "If we may not believe in him, where shall we look? for the time is now come, and will soon be past." "The people make their own Messiah ; let them join themselves heartily to Herod, and by him they will save themselves." These, and a thousand exclamations like them, in a confused murmur, filled the air.

When it had subsided, and others, among whom was Onias, had declared their faith and their purposes, and by their ardour had helped still more to stir the passions and kindle the zeal of all who were present, and by their arguments had added to the confidence they were disposed to place in Herod, the company separated.

But many times have the same persons again assembled, that they might make yet more perfect the schemes they have taken in hand, and learn, by information derived from those who dwell in different and distant parts of the land, the true state of the Jewish mind in those regions. When all had thus been done, in which it was necessary that we should bear a part, we took our leave of Herod, and departed from Machærus.

Such, my mother, have been my fortunes at Machærus, and thus do I stand towards Herod. In no long time, if I take upon myself the charge Herod would impose, will it be my office to visit Rome. Farewell.

When I look back over the long period of time that has intervened, to the scenes witnessed by me at Machærus, and to my intercourse with the tetrarch, I can feel no surprise that I gave myself to the extent I did into his hands. As I recall the image of Herod, there was very much in his countenance, his demeanour, his form, his voice, the manner of his speech, to affect the mind of any one coming within the charmed circle of his influence, especially of a young man who is easily wrought upon by whatever partakes of the mysterious. That was the secret of Herod's power. It was difficult, I should rather say, impossible, to penetrate him. He ever assumed a new face, and one day appeared a different person, both in the aspect of his form, and the state of his mind, and the features of his character, from what he was another ; so that when it seemed as if some progress had been made to-day towards comprehending him, it was found to-morrow to have led to no results that possessed any value. And in respect of that strange fascination, corresponding to what is ascribed to the more formidable serpents, by which he drew those whom he desired into his control, and compelled them to do his will against their own, and yet freely, it can only be said, that no other person of whom I have ever heard,

either through history or otherwise, or have ever known, can be compared with him. There was by no means the greatness of soul in him which, notwithstanding his atrocities, must be allowed to have distinguished his father. But there was often the semblance of it, which it was not easy to distinguish from the reality. Subtlety, and a mind fertile in expedients, were qualities that particularly marked him. But, above all others, that of which I have already spoken, the serpent-power, was eminently his. I, in my youth, knew not what it was that held me. I only knew that there was an attraction in the man which, however in some things, and for some reasons, I would willingly resist it, ever obtained the mastery and prevailed.

LETTER XIV.

I TRUST, my mother, that my letter from Machærus, by the worthy hands of our neighbour the goldsmith, has been safely received. It was not until nearly the last day of our tarrying there, that among the crowds coming and going, my eye caught his familiar countenance, which instantly returned with smiles and friendly greetings my signs of recognition. His affairs have greatly prospered, he assured me, as we conversed at Machærus, inasmuch as out of many applicants, he has been chosen by Herod to work in gold and ivory a gigantic cup as a gift to Tiberius, and a vase of scarcely less size or value for Sejanus, both which labours he has undertaken, and trusts, by the manner in which he shall perform them, to transmit his name with honour to posterity. He will cover them with histories, commemorating the principal events in the life of each of the great personages for whom they are designed. Truly he is an eminent artist, but this appointment of his is not, as his vanity would persuade him, the great event of the times.

There are some greater. Nevertheless, the little worker in gold and ivory is an honest man, if vain; and I doubt not that, as he promised to do, he has borne my letter safely, and himself placed it in your hands.

Upon arriving again at the house of Onias, we were received, as you will believe, with joy by the solitary Judith: solitary, I say; for though there are, as I have already represented, many members of our wide-spread family beneath her roof, and under her care, yet are there none to whom she can turn for that full companionship which she shares with her father, and now, though in less degrees, with myself. But though we relieved her solitude by our presence, I fear we brought little else to comfort her; for it was evident that all the news we imparted of the purposes of Herod, and of our partnership in them, was anything rather than agreeable to her. She could not, nor did she essay to disguise her grief.

"No profiting, my father, I fear me," she said, "can come to Israel by such an instrument. Herod is not he who should reign over Israel; it is another head we need. Aims he at anything save his own exaltation? The people are every day looking for their king, and Herod, building upon this fond expectation, would offer them himself. What better would he be for Israel than his father? Could we think of Herod the Great as the Christ?"

"He, my daughter, enslaved us to Rome, great as he was; Antipas delivers and redeems us."

"And suppose, my father; we were redeemed and delivered, and sat beneath an independent prince, I see not how we should be the gainers. How much differs Herod from Tiberius! With the power, I fear he would show the cruelty and the lust of Tiberius. Such should not be the Messiah of Israel. It is a prophet mighty in word and in deed, a teacher of righteousness, a reformer of our manners whom we want, not less, surely, than a king."

“These, Judith, are the notions sown in thy brain by thy Samaritan mother, now in Abraham’s bosom, and thy Samaritan nurse ; a people—save that God, as in them, hath appeared in a few—cursed and reprobate. Reject they not the prophets, and through them the counsels of God ? How should they judge worthily of the Saviour of Israel ?”

“Yet they believe in Moses, and Moses hath spoken of the Christ.”

“Moses, my child, knew and spoke but in part ; they who have come later have declared more fully the purposes of God. Why have the later prophets come, but to add somewhat to what was known before ? and by them we know that Messiah shall be king and prince, as well as prophet ; teacher he shall be, but prince and ruler also.”

“If so, my father, how shall Herod fulfil the hope of Israel ? He may be king and prince, but how shall he be prophet and instructor ?”

“David, my daughter, was a sinner—but he was a prophet also ; Solomon, the wisest of men, was not the best ; and Moses in his anger slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand. Herod is not without spot ; but God may pour into him what of his own wisdom he will, and when he hath delivered Israel by the power of his arm, he may also purge and cleanse the soul by the healing medicine of his truth. God shall shine so through him, that he shall be no longer himself, but shall be called Immanuel ; in the works he shall do, and the words he shall speak, he shall be God with us.”

“Oh ! far rather, my father, would I that even John were he ; God, we may believe, will, when he speaks, speak through a holy mouth. John is holy and wise ; the people revere him.”

“Be not, my child, so easy to be led astray by thy fancies or the false pretences of cunning men. Thou knowest how many since the time of Archelaus have brought slaughter, robberies, rebellion, and misery upon

our land through their own wicked ambition. John may prove but another of these. If from God, he seems to have no power but such as may be sufficient, by and by, to inflame the multitude with some mad expectation of dominion, which, after a few attempts to gain it, will end in confusion and blood. Whom God shall clothe with his authority, him will he strengthen with his arm, and the signs of his power shall be manifest. These are seen already in Herod, and in him only; and throughout the length and breadth of the land are there those among the chief men, and in Jerusalem especially, who stand with their loins girded, and their lamps burning, waiting for the cry that shall announce him to have arisen, that he may enter into his kingdom. John, in Herod's judgment, is but a habitation of devils; and so, ere long, he trusts to prove it upon him."

But no arguings of Onias, nor of thy son, can prevail to change the fixed mind of Judith, nor of her only; for more than ever are the people drawn towards John with expectations of they know not what. Great numbers still flock to his preaching and his baptism, leaving their homes and their employments; and although he does not as yet give any evidence that he is the person for whom they are waiting, yet they are persuaded that he will presently give such evidence, or will, according to his frequent declarations, be followed and accompanied by one in whom all the prophecies of the Scriptures, and all the wishes of the people, shall find their fulfilment.

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Of late, the declarations of the Baptist concerning another, of whom he is but the precursor, have become the more express and distinct; the thoughts of those who come to him are studiously turned from himself to one of greater power, who is soon to succeed him; although John himself cannot intend to mark out Herod by the mysterious language he uses, yet it fails not to bring him before the minds of others as

the only one from whom it seems possible that help should come; so that, unconsciously, he lends strength to our cause. And we are persuaded, that were Herod's affairs now so far advanced that he could at once present himself before the nation, as he did before his few adherents at Machærus, there is no doubt the people would gather round him with a zeal, and with numbers and a power that Pilate would in vain attempt to withstand. But, alas! very much remains to be done ere such a step can be taken; yet so confident are many of success under any circumstances of action, so uneasy under delay, that our chief danger springs from the possibility of rash and sudden outbreaks of zeal, before the measures which we deem essential can be completed. The greater need of caution exists here from the so near neighbourhood of the Romans in Beth-Harem, and our frequent intercourse with Saturninus; but Pilate, believing himself to have no ground of apprehension beyond Onias, no suspicions attach to the many communications which now take place between us and Herod, and would not, were they known to Saturninus; but they are too well guarded to become known.

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We are now, that the force of the winter is spent, full of cares; messengers arrive and depart by night, going and coming between Beth-Harem, Machærus, Tiberias, Sepphoris, and Jerusalem. Herod's adherents increase day by day, and our confidence with them; but as our confidence and hope increase, the disappointment and sorrow of Judith increase more than in a just proportion to them. She becomes now even vehement in her expressions of disapprobation, or detestation, I should rather say, of Herod. All this Onias refers to her Samaritan nurture, and so leaves it; but in the heart of Judith God hath planted that, I am sure, which demands more for its satisfaction than that which he hath bestowed upon others. It

is not her rearing only that causes the difference; one needs only to observe her countenance, or listen to the sounds of her voice, to know that another and higher sense is in her; and this especially when she is seen or heard reciting those parts of the prophets which most delight or instruct her, or in singing to her harp at the close of a Sabbath-day a sacred hymn of David. Never did the praise of the divine poet so exalt me, or his strains of penitence and sadness so depress me, as when borne to my ear on the voice of Judith; yet whatever she may draw from the prophets and the law, and whatever she may impart to others, she feels and confesses dissatisfaction; their words reach not high enough, they descend not deep enough, for the cravings of her heart. What would she have?

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The successes of John, and the language which he continues to use concerning Herodias, alarm and enrage the tetrarch. To-day a messenger has arrived bearing letters to both Onias and myself. Herod thus writes to Onias:—

“Herod Antipas, tetrarch, to Onias of Beth-Harem. We hear concerning John, that he still preaches on the Jordan, and that yet greater numbers attend him, drawn together in great part by the violence with which he assaileth ourself, our power, the priests, the chief men among the Pharisees, and many others, upon a proper reverence of whom, however, our law insisteth, and the welfare of the state dependeth. The minds of the people are, moreover, turned from us to him; we cannot look to obtain a place in their regards where he hath first entered, nor so long as he is allowed to keep possession. It is our will, therefore, if it also seem good to you, that he be seized, and having been first scourged, be forbidden to baptize or preach within our realm, and dismissed from its borders; and if, in the malice of his heart, he should remain disobedient, that he be then sent close pri-

soner to Machærus: thus will the way be made clear of what is now a hindrance.

Philip of Iturea joins us; or which avails as much, standeth neuter.

These will be delivered by the hand of our faithful Chuza."

It was plain from this epistle of Herod, that the spies whom he had constantly employed had not returned to him an exact account of either the doings of the Baptist, or of the effects which they were producing upon the people; for nothing could appear more evident to Onias and myself, and to others who were careful to observe narrowly, than that John was, with however little intention, preparing the way quite as much for Herod as for himself or any other person. In respect to his charges against the tetrarch in the matter of his brother's wife, the populace take but little thought about them, not knowing how the truth may stand, and leaving such affairs to be managed as it may please the parties concerned. The laws under which both Jews and Samaritans change husband and wife are such, that acts of divorcement take place continually, and make but little stir; while, therefore, they pay slight regard to what John hath said of this, they have caught greedily at all that he hath let drop concerning his follower. His speech has indeed been ambiguous and obscure; either with intention so, or because he is an instrument merely in the hands of a mightier power, and utters oracles by himself not clearly understood. No urgency of those who have pressed about him has availed to make such declarations more precise. The multitudes, therefore, have interpreted his language as their minds have prompted, and their secret wishes have directed; very many, accordingly, have not doubted, that whatever may have been the purpose of John, Herod is the person to whom they are to look. He has thus been set before the people more and more, and greater numbers than before are coming to look upon his preten-

sions with favour. The large sect of the Herodians is beginning throughout their body to unite to their attachment to the Herodian family, and the Roman usages they have introduced, a faith in Antipas as the great restorer, who, at the same time that he shall re-establish the independence of Judea, shall, with a proper observance of the law, freely allow the licenses in which they now indulge, and which they imagine to be needful to the extending of the influence of their law and religion, and the gaining of proselytes beyond the bounds of Judea.

Onias, considering these things, thought it not best that John should either be driven from the country, or suffer any injury at the hands of Herod, and wrote thus to the tetrarch:—

“In the judgment,” said he, “of those in whom thou art wont to put confidence, and to whom thou hast left the determination of the present affair, it would not tend to the furthering of that which we have in hand, were the Baptist driven from these regions, or by the soldiers seized and scourged. The effects of his labours redound more to thy interests than even his own. For while he declares to the foolish multitudes who surround him that he is not himself the Christ—a declaration not, in truth, needed to those who have any discernment at all in the things of God—he at the same time saith that he, as Elias, hath preceded him, and that he shall soon appear. Wherefore it happens that the people, believing him to be a prophet, and seeking to discover whither he would direct their thoughts, are in great numbers led to thee; for in no other quarter whatsoever can they behold a ray of light. If John, they say, be not the Christ, and he doth no miracle, nor giveth any other sign that he is that prophet, to whom can they look but to thee? So that, while he intendeth quite otherwise, John buildeth for thee; notwithstanding that some, who are utterly without eyes or judgment, he succeedeth in turning against thee. But for thy

brother Philip's wife, great king, all Israel were on thy side. May Jehovah guide, and in due time exalt thee !"

Letters in reply to this have been received from the tetrarch, showing his acquiescence in the judgment of Onias, and consenting also, out of regard to urgent representations, to relinquish the further prosecution of his affair with Herodias. It was only on such consent on his part that I would agree to serve his cause. With others also it was made a condition of adherence.

Since these things have been determined, a new vigour has been put into all his followers. Redoubled efforts are making, and the time draws instantly on, when what is now hidden and concealed will be revealed in the plain light of day.

I am not surprised to learn from thy letters that in Rome the same things are to be observed among many as here ; and I hear the like also of our people wherever they are scattered, whether in Greece, Egypt, or the farther East. There is among them all, as letters from all parts inform us, as well as the reports of merchants and travellers, one and the same expectation. Within the limits of Judea and Galilee, the thoughts of all orders of people dwell upon this hope. The appearance, and much more the prophetic declarations of John, however dark and ambiguous, which of late both Onias and myself have heard from him with our own ears, have helped to impart to it new ardour, and give it a yet deeper place in the heart. All this works mightily for us ; and I trust, before another moon, it will be shown throughout all the coasts of Israel, that the hope on which they have fed has been neither poison nor ashes, but as the very food which God himself hath provided to nourish the soul, and be for the salvation of his people. Every day do the people groan beneath new exactions of our avaricious conquerors ; every day do they find their liberty abridged more and more,

themselves and their children subject to cruelties the most wanton and oppressive. Pilate's conduct in Cæsarca, his massacres in Jerusalem, his slaughter of the Galileans while offering their sacrifices, and the lesser acts of tyranny, of which none or few hear or know, save those who suffer, have served, together with what hath taken place on the Jordan, to put fire into men's bosoms, and to kindle there a new and fiercer zeal for God, and his law, and Judea.

LETTER XV.

It is many days, my mother, since I last wrote. Strange events, and unlooked-for, have happened in the meantime to keep me silent, and attentive only to what was taking place immediately around us. In the midst of our enterprises, we have been suddenly arrested by the appearance of another prophet, if prophet he be, on the banks of the Jordan! Where there was but one, there are now two; where there was but John, there are now John and Jesus, for that is the name of him who has now joined him. All the region round about us is in a ferment of curiosity and hope; and so distracted are men's minds, that Herod, and all we who are joined with him, pause at once in our movements. Every arm must hang lifeless until what has now occurred shall receive its interpretation.

The account of these things was first received thus :

It became necessary for me, in obedience to letters received from Herod, to depart for Tiberias, where, during the spring and summer seasons, as being cooler, he chiefly resides. Ziba, having completed our preparations, was awaiting me at the portico overlooking the Jordan. As I stood conversing with Judith, unwilling to depart while that pleasure could be prolonged, choosing, also, that the twilight should deepen farther into the evening shade ere I betook

myself to the public ways, Onias, who had been some days absent at Machærus, suddenly arrived. He had plainly ridden fast and far, the foam rolled from the animal from which he sprang, and he himself seemed disturbed. When he had, as always, affectionately saluted us, he asked, "Whither I was bound?"

I said, "To Tiberias."

"Since what has happened," he replied, "at Bethabara, it can be of no service."

We asked, "Of what do you speak? we have heard nothing."

"That is strange," replied Onias. "Beth-Harem I found stirred throughout; I marvel that Shammai and Zadok have not already been here. What I speak of," continued Onias, "is of the appearance of another prophet, or of the Messiah himself, on the banks of the Jordan, at Bethabara."

We expressed our astonishment, and besought him to relate all he had learned.

"He came yesterday," resumed Onias, "to John to receive with others his baptism; I had not yet arrived there; but thus I was told by those who were there. It was about the ninth hour of the day when, as John was baptising in the stream, his kinsman, Jesus from Nazareth, came, among others, asking to be baptised also. They said, that as John saw him approaching, he paused, and looked steadfastly upon him with such sort of reverence in his eyes, as if he had beheld a person greatly exalted above himself—yea, even as if he had seen an angel from heaven—and that at first he refused to baptise him, as being himself the inferior teacher, which did not fail to fill John's disciples with extreme astonishment, and not less all who stood near; for that John is a prophet sent of God, his followers do not doubt, but boast themselves continually of his authority, and do not scruple to say, as they believe, that he will in the event prove himself the Christ."

"That we continually hear," I said.

"But what immediately happened," resumed thy brother, "filled all who were present with greater wonder still. For they affirm that, when John's unwillingness was overcome by the earnest request or command of Jesus, and they had gone into the river, and while the Baptist poured on the water of purification, a great light suddenly shone on all, beyond the brightness of the day, as if from the opened heavens, and at the same time a voice, not as the voice of a man, declaring him the Son of God. This heavenly sign was but for a moment, and was then withdrawn. The multitude were filled with both fear and amazement, and when it had passed, could hardly say whether what they had witnessed were a reality or a dream; but while they questioned among themselves, Jesus disappeared from the midst of them, and has not since been found."

"This is wonderful, my father, indeed," said Judith. "It surely seems as if God were now visiting us. The long silence seems broken. First John, and now another; surely, my father, you will give heed to this?"

"I have not denied, my child, to John the praise of a righteous man; I have denied him as the Christ only; he is truly a man of God. What hath now happened in Bethabara fills me, Judith, not less than thyself, with astonishment, and with hope also. Doubt not that I shall wait to know what this vision may mean. My trust is even in God, that he will yet appear for his people; and how he shall appear, by what signs, and by what mediator, whether angel or man, our ignorance cannot say. Whoever shall come with the authority of God, him will I receive; Jesus may be he."

As Onias said these things, there was the sound of approaching steps and voices, and in a moment Shammai, Zadok, with others of the synagogue, joined us; they were rejoiced to find Onias at home.

"Now," said Shammai, "let us know the truth, for thou hast been in Bethabara, and, as we hear in

Beth-Harem, wast present at the baptism. We have come from the city for this end, to hear thy report, and bear it back to the city."

They were sorry and greatly surprised to learn that Onias had not himself been present.

"Thus it is," said Zadok, "we know not what nor whom to believe; so of the appearance itself may we well doubt if aught were seen beyond the light of a hot sun passing out from behind a cloud, or heard beyond the rushing of the wind among the trees. The story by this time at Jerusalem speaks, I will warrant, of the heavens being on fire, and of legions of angels descending."

"Nay, nay, Zadok," said Onias, "not so; though I saw not myself, I know those of Bethabara who were present and witnessed the appearance. It was as hath been reported to you, if an honest man is to be believed (and not one only, but very many), who relates what he saw with his own eyes and heard with his own ears. They, indeed, who stood remote on the banks, and were not among such as knew what was taking place, but were attentive to other things, said that they heard only a noise, as of thunder, and saw only a light, as of the lightning; but they only are to be credited who stood by."

"But what," said Zadok, "hath become of the new prophet?"

"While the people," replied Onias, "were talking with each other, overwhelmed with astonishment and fear, he was seen to depart by many who were near him towards the mountains, none hindering or following, or so much as asking whither he would go."

"Well," said Shammai, "these are strange things; but what is strange oft vanishes when more is heard and known."

"And sometimes grows," said Judith, "to what is stranger still."

"Yes, daughter," he replied, "you say true; so that patient waiting for the full event is the part of

the wise. But," continued the ruler, turning to Onias, "whence came this Jesus? You have told us whither he is gone—for in Beth-Harem some say one thing, and some another. One affirms he is from Judea, near Hebron, because he is a kinsman of John; others that he is from Bethlehem; and others from Galilee."

"The last are right," answered Onias; "he is of Galilee."

"He were better from some other part of the land," said Shammai, "for his own sake."

"He is not only from Galilee," continued Onias, "but from Nazareth in Galilee."

"Ha, ha," laughed Zadok; "prosperity await him! a prophet from Nazareth! When a just man shall be found among the Sadducees, a holy man among the Essenes, or an honest man among the publicans, then may a prophet come from among the Nazarenes; they are truly the progeny of swine."

"It will at least," said Shammai, "take more than a day to win hearers and believers."

"That may be," said Judith; "yet if he should perchance overcome such prejudgments, it would then be so much the more in his favour."

"Perchance, perchance," cried Zadok; "that was a good word, maiden, to put in; there is little danger of such victory."

"Well," said Judith, "with Shammai we will wait and see."

"Yes, child," answered Zadok, "we will wait; and wait we shall, till Jordan runs backwards to his springs, ere we shall see a prophet come out of Galilee."

"Do not some affirm," said Judith, "that he is of Bethlehem? Perchance, Zadok, he may yet be found to be of Judea."

"Yea, daughter, perchance."

"The rumour concerning the origin at Bethlehem comes," said Onias, "doubtless from this, that he was born there at what time his parents were gone up to

the enrolment in the days of Quirinius ; for this Jesus—unless, indeed, all be false—is he who was hailed King of the Jews by the Magians of Arabia, in the reign of Herod the Great ; of whose strange birth all Israel heard, but afterwards heard no more.”

“We all remember the tale,” said Shammai, “to have been told to us ; and some of us, Zadok, can remember through our own hearing.”

“I number, Shammai, but forty years, and know nothing thereof.”

“But where,” asked Shammai, “has this youth concealed himself during the years since the time of his birth ?”

“As I learned at Bethabara,” Onias replied, “he hath dwelt in Nazareth, save that at the feasts he hath ever gone up to Jerusalem, carefully observing the law. But this is affirmed also, that he is of the family and lineage of David.”

“That,” said Shammai, “will place him above John in his hopes of a ready reception, for John could not claim as much ; yet we hear that the disciples of John contend that the voice pointed to their master as the Son of God, rather than Jesus ; the name of neither having been pronounced.”

“So,” replied Onias, “it happened ; for although John said at the first of himself that he was but the herald of one greater, and so declares to this day, his followers scruple not to believe and to declare that he is himself that greater ; and this notwithstanding also the plainness with which the Baptist hath announced Jesus as a prophet above all, even He who should come.”

Said Zadok, “Verily, Onias, thy words seem like one who is ready to believe these things himself. Hast thou too been baptised in Jordan ?”

“Jest not, Zadok,” replied thy brother, “with things that may be of God ; the times are full of dread. I am, as thou well knowest, as you all know, firmly bound to Herod ; but Herod is not God, nor

hath God spoken as yet by him. Wherever and whenever I shall hear, or believe I hear, the voice of God, and behold the signs that shall show his presence and power, there shall I be to listen and obey. In John I have beheld them not, yet is he a man of God; he is not the hope of Israel, though the spirit of God may rest upon him. But what can we yet say of Jesus? If the eyes and ears of men have not been blinded or deceived by the powers of darkness, then hath the God of our nation spoken; the multitudes of Bethabara doubt not that he has. The heavenly signs were not to be mistaken, they affirm; yet, as I judge, we know not enough in this either to affirm or deny. The power of invisible spirits, and of the angels who fell, we know not; it may be a delusion of Satan; let us wait to see more; we must know him and hear him. It must reasonably give pause to us and to all, that Jesus has already withdrawn from sight, plunging immediately into the secret places of the mountain deserts. But, Zadok, while it may be that God hath indeed descended among us, and has at length revisited his people by the prophet whom long since he promised, it becometh all his children to bow in reverence and wait his will."

Zadok, far from being moved by what Onias had said with his air of deep sincerity, was evidently labouring while he spoke to suppress his scorn and contempt. His eye, the while, was fired with the inward passion, and his lip curled with derision. He was about to speak, but Shammai interposed.

"Zadok, Onias is right; and such should be our teaching at the synagogue. The prophets have fore-shown that Messiah shall in these days reveal himself, but they have not said with what form he shall come, with what signs he shall be announced, nor how attended. The thoughts and ways of Jehovah are not as ours. When he appeared of old to his servant, he was not in the fire, nor in the whirlwind, but in the small voice. So, if we would be prudent, shall we say

it may be now. The people look for one coming in the pomp and circumstance of a prince, so that every eye shall confess him as there, or there, or here ; but perchance they misjudge the trappings of a true prince. A prince and king he certainly will be ; he who is to come is truly to be the deliverer of Israel ; but where shall be the hiding of his power, and what the instruments he shall use, and what the raiment he shall wear, and the ensigns of his dignity, who may dare to say ?”

“The ruler hath spoken what is right,” cried many voices of those who were crowded around intently listening. “Let us wait and see,” exclaimed others. “If Jesus is the son of David, we shall soon behold him on his throne ; that will show him.”

“And if he is Beelzebub’s minister, as he seemeth by this seeking the desert places, we shall see him no more ; he hath already gone back to his master,” cried Zadok’s shrieking voice.

With these words, and other discourse which followed, Shammai, Zadok, and those who had accompanied them, took leave, and departed to the city.

Thus, my mother, are we, as I have said, already arrested in our affairs. As the thoughts of all are swallowed up by the strangeness of these events, and are not to be diverted from them, we are compelled to give way and remain inactive ; so far we are determined in our course by the events and circumstances themselves. Obeying, therefore, the counsel of Onias, and the necessity of things also, I went not to Tiberias, but despatched Ziba instead, bearing letters to Herod.

I send this, my mother, at the moment I have written it, that you may receive early knowledge of the wonderful things that have happened.

LETTER XVI.

THE day following that on which I last wrote, I sought the streets of Beth-Harem, both that I might learn what more there was to be known concerning Jesus, and that I might visit again the leper and his daughter, whom I had seen before my journey to Machærus, but whom since that period I had committed to the care of Judith. Of their welfare she has often assured me; for though she herself, partaking of the common feelings of the people concerning the disease, has seen them but once, yet has she bestowed upon them many gifts and kindnesses through her servants.

It was not difficult to perceive on the way to the city, but especially in the streets, whichever way one turned, that some events had occurred by which the minds of the people were much disturbed. They were everywhere gathered together conversing with earnestness, and either inquiring for news, or imparting it. At the market-place I found not only those who are accustomed to pass there the greater portion of the time which they know not otherwise how to rid themselves of, but many others of the chief persons of the city and neighbouring country. John and Jesus were the names upon the lips of all. I approached one who sold fruits, with whom several were conversing. As I tasted his grapes, some of which I desired to purchase for the leper and his daughter, and listened to those who were talking, the countryman addressed me, saying, "What think you, sir; shall we hear anything more of this Jesus of Bethabara?"

I said that I could have no opinion worth repeating, as I had heard so little; nor, indeed could any, as so little had been seen or was known of him.

"Not much, in truth," he replied, "is known of Jesus; but of John much is known, and he has borne his testimony to Jesus; and if any one should be be-

lieved, surely it is John, whom all who know, know to be honest."

I said I had never heard John nor seen him; but the reports that had been brought to me were in his favour; but how should he know anything of Jesus?

"How," said one who stood by, "should a prophet know anything but by the power of God?"

"But how," I asked, willing to know their opinion, "do men know John to be a prophet; he has wrought no miracle that I have heard?"

"That is very true," replied the countryman, "but did he not constantly prophesy of the coming of one after him, whom the people knew nothing of, but who would one day reveal himself; and has he not now come? He is surely shown to be a prophet, for his prophecy has come to pass."

"If, as you judge, he prophesied the coming of the Messiah," I replied, "is it not too early to say that the prophecy is fulfilled? since we know not as yet that Jesus is he; and surely the manner of his appearing makes not much for him."

"I do not know," replied the other, "why we should look for everything at once; he indeed appears as other men, so we are told; but what say you to the voice, and the heavens opened? are not these somewhat?"

"If those things," I answered, "indeed happened as has been related, they do truly declare that God is with Jesus or John, whichever was pointed out by the voice, but surely they make neither to be the Messiah?"

"That, indeed, is true as you say," rejoined the other; "but then to one who is ready to believe, it makes it so likely, that it seems to be almost, or quite enough of itself."

"Ah! you foolish people," cried Zadok's voice from behind me, "stand ready to believe everything; if one were to hearken to you, Christ comes every day; for no sooner doth a man look or speak differently from others, than behold you cry out, Here is Christ! Verily, ye will yet be the cause that the Romans will

suck us dry as the Jordan in the month Ab, and grind us to powder fine as dust of Arabia. It is a pity that, for the sake of Judea, your mouth could not be stopped and your hands tied."

"That they would be, I am sure," rejoined the other, nothing daunted, "if you Scribes had the power you wish you had; but happily you have it not. Had you dared, John had long ago been put out of the way; but while the people are for him, it is more than you dare attempt, even with Herod on your side."

"Whether we dare or not," cried Zadok, already inflamed with passion, "you shall see betimes; John's days—mark me, my young rustic—John's days are already numbered! And so would I say are those of Jesus, but that he has already betaken himself back again to his master. What can you look for from such as these? idiots, fools, asses, that ye all are;" and he turned away in a rage.

"There's a Pharisee for you! there's a ruler of a synagogue! there's a man of the law for you!" cried the countryman. "It is much more likely such as he, thick enough here, but thicker yet, as we hear, in Jerusalem, will themselves bring the country to nought. If Christ came in the very form of God, would they not believe him, if in their conceit he ought not so to have come; though the heart were soft as a ripe fig, it were better than to be as hard as a mill-stone. These, sir, not those, are my best grapes—try these. But we spoke just now of John; I have seen him and heard him many a time in the villages just above here, and to see him and to hear him is to believe him trustworthy; the marks of honesty are in his face and voice."

"But," said I, "so strange in his appearance, that many scruple not to say that he is possessed."

"It is said," rejoined the other, "by those who wish him ill. He is but like other country folks, save in his wisdom, which is that of a prophet. They will say just some such thing of Jesus, I warrant you,

should he prove what we hope ; but they will truly both fare ill, if Zadok and such as he become inflamed against them. They say already that he has done much to set Herod against John, reporting carefully whatever he says against either him or Herodias ; but the counsels of such a man cannot prevail ; God will confound them."

"All the Pharisees," I said, "are not like Zadok."

"Most are," interrupted the other.

"It may be so," I answered, "for I am but lately come into Judea ; but all are not like him. Onias, whom doubtless thou knowest, is willing to wait and see. Shammai——"

"Shammai," responded the other, "is a Sadducee."

"I do not think so," I answered, "though many so report him."

"It matters little what he is," replied the seller of fruit, "whether Sadducee or Pharisee ; he is something better than either—a good and a just and a kind-hearted man. He would let every man have his way, provided he would injure no one ; but for these others, if you so much as choke a little at swallowing down whole all they swallow with throats they have spent their lives in stretching, you are out of the synagogue, or up before the council ere your eye can wink."

I would willingly have talked longer with this man, but that purchasers, happily for him, thickened about him, so that I was compelled to turn away. In all parts of the market-place, and in the neighbourhood of the synagogue, from which those were just coming who—as with us—had been present at the morning prayers, I found the same topics in the mouths of all. None, so far as I could learn, save a few violent as Zadok, were disposed to deny the reality of the voice and the heavenly light at the baptism of Jesus ; and few, putting together with that what was now generally received, that Jesus is the same whose birth was marked by the like prodigies many years ago, hesitate to believe that he is indeed the promised and expected deliverer. Many are so

wrought upon, that language does not suffice to convey their confident belief, but they give expression to it by loud and passionate cries, by gestures, and by a countenance which, in every feature, utters the sentiments of the heart. The children in the streets have also caught the joy from the elders, and cry out in their shrill voices, "Christ is come! Christ is come!" His concealment since the baptism they explain some one way and some another, but it hinders not the current of their joy ; they doubt not he will soon reappear, and show himself more fully. The news having been carried already not only into all the country round about Bethabara and the Jordan, but even to Jerusalem, great numbers have flocked together to learn the tidings in the very neighbourhood of the places that have become so signalised, or at least where, as in Beth-Harem, many may be met who have seen or conversed at least with some who were present at the baptism, and witnessed the wonder ; every eye seemed to glisten with joy, every mouth was full and overflowing with words of congratulation and hope. "Christ is come! Christ is come!" fell upon the ear at every turn.

As I parted from these crowds, and was passing by the great gates of the citadel, I encountered Saturninus. Saluting each other, at his invitation I entered his quarters. As the gates unfolded, and I passed beneath the arched way leading to the inner square, the clash of arms fell upon my ear, and the voices of those who issued commands.

"It is but the soldiers at their exercise," said the centurion, "a sight which must be familiar to you as a Roman."

I said that "often, even from my youth, had I taken delight in witnessing at the Prætorian camp the exercises of the soldiers, and then used to lament that nature had made me not a Roman, but a Jew, whereby I was shut out from what seemed to me the chief avenue to glory."

"Thy birth did not hinder thee from serving," said Saturninus; "the camp opens its arms to all who will swear fealty to Rome."

"That," I answered, "neither my mother, nor, in truth, my father, would suffer me to do; and when early youth was past, that I would not do myself; I loved Rome and Roman ways, but still I remembered I was a Jew; now I think every way differently. But for thyself, Saturninus, having so many times rioted in the field of battle, this must be a wearisome task, set here in the heart of Asia to watch mutinous Jews; time must move with leaden wings?"

"Many things prevent that," he replied; "I no longer love war for its own sake, as I am obliged to say I once did. I willingly greet the quietness and repose I find here; and, to speak the honest truth, I love your people. Of late years I have studied philosophy more than the science and art of war; I oftener, when liberty is mine, take up a book than the sword; I converse with those who give proof that they have souls and desires, rather than with those who only seem as if they were a clod of earth, a little more animated than what lies wholly dead, and the ploughshare turns over. I find among this people curious subjects of inquiry, singular specimens of our race, and a deeper love of thoughts which go beyond the confines of the senses, higher or deeper, than among any other I have known. Especially have I been instructed by reading your sacred books, where I have found a religion worthy altogether, or almost, of both the great God and of man his creature; so that with such tastes and inclinations, Julian, thou seest I am not likely to pass the time heavily; besides these things, I need not to thee speak of the house of Onias."

"Thou needest not; the sun ever shines in the dwelling of Onias; and to dwell in sunlight is all we can ask. But say, how long doth Pilate continue

your guard in Beth-Harem? Is he still apprehensive that the Jew Julian will raise new disturbances?"

Saturninus laughed. "It is little, I believe, that he fears," said he, "either from thee or Onias; but I need not, or ought not to say, why he occupies Beth-Harem."

"Let me," I said, "draw no secret from an enemy."

"Whatever brought me here, however," resumed the centurion, "there seems of late to be growing up reasons enough for my remaining; and so, I suppose, must I report to Pilate."

"And what are these new reasons," I asked, "if they be not also of a secret nature?"

"O no," he answered, "these I may communicate; they have existed but for a few days. It seems from all I can learn, that some long-expected person, whom they call Christ, has made his appearance on the Jordan, from whom great actions are looked for, such as the rescue of Judea from Rome, and the like; so I hear at least on every side. Ominous and threatening words are thrown out as I pass along, or as the people look on the soldiers at their exercises. The young urchins, who are thickest about our tents, have caught the song, and cry out, 'Take care, Romans, Christ is come!' 'Now for Israel; down with the Romans!' What the true sense is I know not; I take no other note of it than to hear the words, and ponder them."

I only said in reply, that I knew well whereof he spoke; but that truth in the matter was difficult of access on account of the contradictory nature of the rumours which were abroad, as well as many groundless superstitions cherished by the lower orders of the people.

Saturninus now led me from where we had sat into the midst of the soldiers whom I beheld, some shooting with the arrow at a mark, others throwing the lance, others attacking and defending with shield and sword, and others exercising with the gloves of the

gladiator, so bringing into the most complete and violent action every part of the body. When I had sufficiently surveyed these, and had enjoyed further conversation with the centurion, I left the citadel, and bent my steps towards the dwelling of the leper.

I soon reached the place, which seemed to me even more desolate and wretched than when I first saw it. It had the appearance of the ruins of extensive prisons, which had been destroyed by assault or by fire; the remains of which were permitted to stand as they had been left by the fiery element or by war, serving as a shelter for domestic animals of every kind from the occasional violence of the weather, and in its better apartments, as a home for some poor outcasts, such as the leper and his daughter. As I stood at the entrance a moment, considering the hard fate of those who were compelled to seek the protection of so gloomy and comfortless a dwelling, one joined me who seemed, from his wretched garments and neglected aspect, as if he too was of its inhabitants. He bore the marks of extreme poverty, but not of the misery that commonly accompanies it; nor was he afflicted by disease, unless that may be called disease which follows the use of such drinks as cause drunkenness, and leaves its marks in the eye and on the skin; but save this, he was of a cheerful look, and seemed from his gait and manner as if he were rather a prince, or a princely merchant, than a beggar. He saluted me with great courtesy, and asked to join my company. "Observing," he said, "that I was a stranger to this part of Beth-Harem, he would give me such information as I appeared to be ignorant of concerning the ruins."

I said that I was truly a stranger, and should value all he could tell me.

He then went on to relate the fortunes of the building from its origin down to the wars of Antiochus and the Maccabees, when it was destroyed by the soldiers of the king, and from that time had been suffered

to stand as we now beheld it; and so strongly had it been built at first, that the elements passed over it without removing so much as a stone. "It now," he ended with saying, "has become the happy residence of some such as himself, raised by fortune above the wants of life."

I said that, on the contrary, he seemed to me to be a person subject to some of its sharpest wants.

"The eye," said he, "is a great deceiver; it sees not far. There are those who seem as princes in Beth-Harem, who are nevertheless slaves, and those who shine in gold, who are beggars; while I am free of all men, and have, seeming to possess nothing, more than I can use. Having no possessions, and few or no wants, I have no cares. The day is mine from the first hour to the last, to pass it as I may, not fearing the demand of any upon either my time or my labour. In truth I know not labour; and of time I take no account, but as it brings about the seasons of eating, drinking, and sleeping. Who then in Beth-Harem so happy as I? I have but to speak a word, and my wants, such as they are, are supplied. God watcheth over the earth, and the people of Beth-Harem over me."

"Yet your dwelling is miserable," said I, "and your garments are but filthy rags; a little labour would provide better things than these."

"My garments," he replied, "are indeed but rags; but then they cover me, and they cost me no care. Why should I be anxious for more? And for my dwelling, come and see it."

I said that I would trust to his word. I had come to see the leper and his daughter; I would now enter and seek for them.

"Ah," said he, "you speak of the merchant of Tyre; he is not now in his apartment. He is abroad enjoying the city, and will return at the sixth hour. Meanwhile, come and see how the better sort of the inhabitants of Beth-Harem dwell."

So saying he led the way into the buildings, I following. He passed through dark and ruined arches, and desolate and uninhabited apartments, out of which, as their den, half-famished dogs fled howling at our approach. Into these arched ways and rooms light sometimes came through the broken roof or narrow chinks in the walls, defended and half obscured by bars of iron. We soon stopped at the door of a room like others we had passed through, and then entered.

"This," said my guide, "is my home. This straw is my bed, and, as you see, it is all I have: I need no more. The high-priest at Jerusalem tastes not such sleep as I. The world is troubled about Pilate and Herod, Jesus and John; but it all passes by me as the air which I cannot hear or see."

As he spoke, I heard not far from us the clank of chains, and the voice, low and wailing, as of one who sang, or wept, and complained. I asked its meaning. He said it is one who is beside himself, and held in bondage for both his own and others' safety. Let us go to him. Devils possess him wholly."

We went in the direction of the sound.

We found the room of the possessed person much like the others I had seen, of solid stone, dropping with moisture. A little light streamed in from a small opening, and fell upon the spot where he sat: it showed him to us bound hand and foot with strong chains to the wall against which he leaned. He was naked, but, as if revisited suddenly by a dim recollection of former days, he drew together the straw about him as he beheld us approaching, and held down his head: the long matted hair fell over it, and wholly concealed him from our view. Presently he raised his head by stealth, and gazed upon us, and then spoke in a low tone, and as if afraid, saying, "Who are you, and why do you come here?"

"That," said my companion, "was himself that spoke; so his own voice ever is, low and sorrowful."

"If you can help me," said the possessed again, "help me now; quick, while the keepers are gone. They will be back anon, and then you can do nothing. Wonderful it is, how you stand still, your hands playing with your robe, and help me not. Why do you, who are a Jew, wear a Roman dress? But come, hasten and set me free. Do I not tell you my masters will soon be back? O fools and Satans—they are coming—I hear them"—saying which he trembled and sunk his head again upon his bosom, clasping over it his chained hands.

In a moment more, and his hands fell from over his head; he looked fiercely up, as if he had suddenly changed to another person; his voice became shrill and wild, as he laughed loud, and said, "Art thou Uzzi? Canst thou do more than Pharez? Never believe it. Thou canst never drive us out. Here we are, and here we mean to dwell; it is a good dwelling, and we will not leave it. Pharez has tried all his art, but thou seest we are yet here—we are three, he is one. Our master, too, is on our side; what canst thou do? Let us alone, and begone. Nay, nay," said he after a long pause, in his other voice, and as if afraid of being overheard, "do not go; stay awhile, and they will all be gone, and then you can help me; and for all you do for me I can enrich you more than your hearts can conceive; for—I tell it to you as a secret—I know where all the treasures of Solomon are hid, and you shall share them. In truth," he whispered, "I am his son."

"We cannot help you," said my companion; "neither can Pharez or Uzzi; but Christ, you know, is come, and it will be his business to overthrow the kingdom of devils; he will drive them out."

"Christ! Christ!" shrieked the possessed, "he is not come; and if he were, we fear him not: our master is as strong as he. This body is our house, and neither John nor Jesus can shut us out: here we reign, and here shall do as we will. Ah, help me now," cried the miserable man in his low and alarmed

tones, "they are about to torment me. Now they thrust their fangs into my vitals, and tear them." Saying this, he cried out as if in torment, his body was convulsed throughout, and he fell down among his chains and straw as one dead.

"Now he is at his ease," said my conductor, "therefore let us leave him. He will lie so for many hours, as if he were indeed dead, save that his limbs continue thus wrenched and awry, and that his mouth foams. But when he awakes, he evermore avers that he hath only slept, so that we are much alike, he and I; he eats, drinks, and sleeps, and so do I. We differ but in this—that his food is brought to him, while I must needs seek mine over Beth-Harem. We are alike in life; and death is the same to all. Now I hear the merchant in his apartment; let us seek him."

I found the merchant, as my new companion chose to call him, in the same place as before, but made a greatly more comfortable residence by the kind offices of Judith. The leper and his daughter were rejoiced to see me again, and were loud in their expressions of thanks for what through me had been bestowed upon them.

"My little Ruth," said the leper, "has not ceased to speak your praises and those of the good daughter of Onias. The poor child will never hear her own praises, I fear, save from me alone." Ruth seemed troubled that her father had spoken thus, and turned away her face. I said that "they who were conscious of doing what God enjoins, can spare the praises of man."

The girl looked again towards me, and expressed pleasure in her beaming eyes.

I then said to the leper that I had, on my late journey to Machærus, seen those whom I supposed to be his brother and his family, and gave an account of what had happened.

He said he supposed that I "had indeed seen them, for the place agreed with what he had been told. But

for him, alas ! but for him my Ruth would have been as a princess of Tyre. Who among her thousand merchants could count so many ships as I ? who was so observed in the streets, and in the market, and in the synagogue ? whose wealth poured in in so many streams with channels so deep ? All men honoured me, and the foundations of my prosperity seemed deep as the roots of Lebanon. In one night it all vanished as a dream, and my Ruth is all that is left ; yet she is worth more than all."

"Speak not thus, my father," said the girl, "nor ever think of Tyre. God hath smitten us and afflicted us, but the smiling of prosperity might have been worse ; David saith that afflictions are good. This I know, that if it be to them that we owe our present peace, then are they not evil, not worst. If one might have prosperity and peace therewith, that indeed were better ; but if they must needs be divided, then to us has fallen the better part."

"True, my child ; and what we now have we cannot, as riches, lose, and so our happiness is secure."

"The fear of God may depart from us," said Ruth.

"Then, indeed," said the parent, "all were lost ! But it will not ; from thee it cannot depart, from me it shall not. I may depart, but while I have my breath, I will fear God and serve him. Yet but for thee, my daughter, I would I were in Abraham's bosom. Why do I live ?"

The girl wept. The father continued—"Yet who would defend thee from the rude and the wicked were I away ? I must not die, Ruth. It is hard either way. I would die, and I would not ; I would live, and I would not. While I talk thus, do I not seem to forget the providence of God ? It matters not, it matters not, my child, whether I live or die ; God will shield thee. None can withstand him ; thou wilt be safe putting thy trust in him."

The old man seemed to have forgotten that any one was present besides themselves ; while, therefore,

the girl continued weeping, I said that the providence of God was in truth always sufficient, and that they who put their trust in it would never be forsaken—they would have that peace which surpassed all other blessings; but his daughter should not want also for earthly friends: while I lived, and the daughter of Onias, she should be cared for and defended, nor should the shadow of an evil fall on her which human force could turn aside.

“Now the Lord bless thee,” cried the leper, “and give thee peace; it was but this I wanted. Now, O Lord, even now, would I be at rest. As thy righteous servant Job, by reason of his sore distresses, desired death rather than life, so too does thy servant before thee: mine eyes are darkened, my skin is foul and horrid to the sight, my feet are eaten away; and of him who was once as a shaft of polished marble, nothing now remaineth but a loathsome and dismembered trunk. When the morning comes, I say would to God it were evening; and when it is evening, I say would to God it were morning. Day and night they are both alike to me, and both are vanity. Why should I live?”

“Do I love thee less, my father,” cried his daughter, beautiful in her tears, “that thy skin is rough, and thine eyes and feet are gone. It is thee I love, not thy limbs; and were it that thy prayer were answered, where should I go, and whom on earth should I love? I know, alas! thy memory goes back to other and better days; but I have known thee only as now, and only thee. Pray not for death, or else that I may die with thee.”

Again the young girl was overcome by her grief. My companion, who had hitherto remained silent, now spoke.

“Lose not thy courage, my old neighbour,” said he; “thy lot is not so dark as thou thinkest. I complain not of life, nor of death, of God, nor of man; yet how do we greatly differ? I have eyes, indeed, but I use

them not; I have feet, but they serve me not, save to move me hence to the market-place, and thence back again. I have a skin, not beautiful, nor either indeed scaly with leprosy, yet it profits me not. Who loves me the better for the things in which I surpass thee? Who loves Zadok the Pharisee, though of limbs and senses he wanteth not one? Would thy young daughter exchange thee for Zadok? What profit is there in that which profiteth not? Thy rest is better for thyself and the world than another man's motion, thy blindness than another man's sight, thy ugliness than another's beauty, thy poverty than another's wealth. Riches and beauty do but corrupt, and labour does but weary. I am happier than any man in Beth-Harem, save, perhaps, the wise Shammai; but thou shouldst be happy as I; thy daughter should be to thee as a sun to warm thee, and a light shining deeper than thine eyes, even on thy heart."

With these words he waved his rags with a majestic movement, and looked towards me for applause, with a countenance in which jest and seriousness seemed strangely contending. His speech brought a smile on the faces of the unhappy leper and his daughter, and though they might little agree with what he had said, it had the good effect of changing the current of their thoughts and lightening their sorrow.

"Whatever thanks," said the leper, "we may owe to the people of Beth-Harem, who remember the poor and feed them with bread, we owe none more than this our friend and neighbour, who many a time hath not only divided his loaf with us, but much more, always cheers our sorrows by his merry voice and by his sayings, which, if they agree not always with Moses and the prophets, show themselves true by causing the hearers either to laugh or weep. Had death——"

"Talk no longer," cried the beggar, "of dying; these are the days to live; who knows upon whom the honours of the new kingdom may fall? Under

King John or King Jesus I may rise to power, and when I do, thou shalt. I will not forget old friends in my new glory."

Being interrupted here by a wild and piercing shriek from the room of the possessed man, the beggar hastily withdrew, saying "that he must look to the wants and welfare of his other neighbour, for that, after his long sleep, he needed both food and drink."

I also took leave of the leper and his daughter, after having again given them every needed promise that I would not forsake them, and that in Judith Ruth should ever find one who would protect her. The old man, by such repeated assurances, was made to forget the evils of his lot in the benefits which he could still enumerate, and returned to that contentment of spirit which his daughter assures me is the usual condition of his mind.

Returning again through the midst of the city, I found the people still anxious and inquisitive as before concerning the reports from Bethabara. Nothing more, however, could I learn in which trust could be placed, save that by those who this day had come from thence, had confirmed what was said at first by Onias, that Jesus had disappeared among the fastnesses of the wilderness to the east of the Jordan, and had been seen by none since the baptism.

When I again saw Judith, and had related to her my conversation with the inhabitants of the Old Prisons, she said that a dwelling which she had caused to be prepared for the leper was now ready, to which he might soon be removed. Although the apartment they now occupied had been made more secure than before against the elements by the labours of those whom Judith had employed, and had become a more agreeable residence than any other part of the ruins, still I was glad to learn that another and better was procured; and no time was lost in removing them from the one to the other. The beggar, I hoped, would take possession of the room which the Tyrian

merchant had abandoned, but he could not be persuaded to do so much as only to change the direction of his steps to reach it. It were undergoing, he thought, needless labour. "Besides," said he, "why should I change that with which I am already satisfied, for another thing with which, truly, you and others may be better pleased, but which has no new charms for me? I have but three wants—food, drink, and a place where I may lie and sleep. Food is food, drink is drink, and sleep is sleep. I see not why I were better to take my lettuce and figs from a silver dish, my wine from a golden cup, my sleep on a silken couch—the nature of the fig, the wine, and of sleep, is still the same. It asks none of these additions for the poor man to receive both pleasure and nutriment from his food and his repose. In this God is seen to be merciful and equal; good wine tastes no better to Herod than to a beggar, and honey is not sweeter to Pilate than to me. The life here, moreover, being thus alike to each, dost thou judge that Herod will find more favour in the life to come than the beggar of Beth-Harem? Verily, I should stand forth boldly at his side in the day of judgment, nay, betwixt him and Pilate, nor be afraid."

So that he cleaves to his straw, his wet and dripping walls, his wretched den, into which, through the cavities where doors and windows once were, dogs enter to sleep by his side, or to devour the food they have stolen, causing oftentimes the vacant halls and winding passages to resound with their frightful howlings as they pursue each other, and fight for the morsel which is to save those who conquer from death or griping hunger.

Judith now often resorts to the dwelling of the leper, where she beholds its tenants enjoying greatly every addition that has been made to their comfort. In Ruth she discovers one in whom a spirit dwells of so much native excellence, that none of the base conditions of extreme poverty and adversity have had

power to bring any stain upon it. Her father's judgment of her she finds to be true, when he said that she was too pure for the touch of leprosy to harm her. On such occasions I often accompany her, and beneath this roof of poverty have I passed many of the most agreeable hours, and most instructive also, since I have dwelt in these regions; for the leper, now that he is at rest, sitting beneath a roof which is secured to him, his daughter, rescued from the dangers that had ever hitherto surrounded her, returns to the feelings and thoughts of his earlier life, and shows himself not only a devout lover of the law and worshipper of God, but a man who has known much of the ways of the world, whose mind has drawn knowledge from many quarters, and in his adversities has possessed power to retain what he had gained, if not to increase its stores. His conversation is that of one both devout and wise; and his daughter, who possesses from nature larger and better gifts than the father, and has received, in addition, all that he could teach—for all his happiness these many years has come from the instruction which by conversation he could thus impart—proves also a new source of pleasure, not to Judith only, but to Onias and myself also. Happier circumstances, the society of those who are her equals, comparative plenty, with friendship, have daily called out new expressions on her countenance, and shown new beauties and graces of mind and heart, by which we have been astonished and delighted. She has already become more necessary to our happiness than we are to hers.

Nothing in addition for many days has been heard of Jesus, and the people grow despondent. Many will not believe that anything like what has been asserted has happened; but while the eyes and ears of men are as they were made, and devils do not enter us to pervert what the senses would convey, then doubtless, they say, that took place which has been affirmed, whether or not Jesus is heard of again.

Surely never was there a time when a whole people were thus waiting to receive with acclamations of welcome a promised deliverer, which of itself seems to show, that if God be about to send forth a prophet, he will now appear, or having appeared, he will return. All are ready to bear him up and on to every honour ; every heart is beating with hope ; every hand waits but the word to grasp the sword or the spear. I cannot doubt that whatsoever may be the reason of his tarrying, the delay will not be long. Peace be with thee.

While Jesus, for reasons which then were not understood, but which have since been declared, thus withdrew himself from the scene where he had first made himself known, and from the great length of the time during which he remained hidden from the eyes and the knowledge of the people, it was believed by many that he would not return, Herod again deemed it a favourable time to continue the preparations he had made, and strengthen his cause among the people. No letters can I discover written during this period, but my recollection of those days is distinct of much intercourse with Herod by letters, by messengers, and by visits at Machærus. The tetrarch was sure that no more would ever be heard of Jesus ; and although he would not with clearness declare all that he had done, yet he darkly shadowed forth in obscure phrases (which he loves to use) that an emissary from him had sought and found Jesus during his retreat into the wilderness, and had become convinced that he was not what he was at first believed to be, and that nothing need be feared or hoped from him. The proffer of honour, and wealth, and power, even to that of half the kingdom, nay, the supreme power, which was freely made if he would join with Herod—made in the belief that he was a prophet, and endowed with powers more than human—he would not accept ; and doubtless because he did not in truth possess such powers ; for upon being earnestly pressed to give

some proof thereof, he complied not, but steadfastly refused. Had he in truth possessed them, Herod was sure that he would have given some token; for no one who came to fill the office of Messiah would spurn the offers which he had made, since they were those of a strict alliance with him for the prosecution of the self-same ends and objects, which he, as the deliverer, must have had in view.

These reasonings of Herod, however, especially taken together with the fact, that a messenger of his had found Jesus and conversed with him, only served to convince Onias and the rest of his firmest adherents that it were wiser to delay the contemplated movements yet a little longer. His inquiries had settled what before all were doubtful about, namely, that Jesus was still alive, and not very remote. It was clear that none would consent to resume their undertaking until he had been again seen, and his character and purposes determined.

The tetrarch was irritated by such opposition; he was confident in his own strength, and impatient of restraint and delay; but by much persuasion he was made to renounce all farther purpose of action, till the minds of the people should be quieted by the confirmation or defeat of their hopes.

LETTER XVII.

At length, my mother, after long waiting, and when the people had nearly abandoned all hope of what they desired, Jesus hath again appeared, not as before, on the Jordan, but far from us, in Galilee. At the same time that this news has been brought to our ears, we are told also of astonishing miracles which he has wrought in the towns and villages of that quarter. How shall I describe the amazement and joy that fill the minds of all! Every day and every hour are reports brought to our ears of new wonders

he has done, and every day and hour doth the joy of the people rise higher and higher; no one doubts now that God has indeed visited his people. Great numbers, not patient enough to wait for the time when Jesus shall visit other parts of the country, and doubtless, among others, the valley of the Jordan, have flocked to Galilee, that they may at once remove their doubts, or invigorate their faith, by themselves seeing and hearing the new prophet. All Beth-Harem is astir, and the synagogues, the streets, and house-tops, resound with the praises of the worshippers, giving thanks for the great redemption that has drawn nigh. All Jerusalem also, so we hear, not less than the parts about us, is moved, and multitudes have already resorted to Capernaum and the shores of the Lake of Galilee. We remain, for many reasons, on the banks of the Jordan, satisfied with the knowledge which we continually receive from such as are arriving and departing, and on whose truth and exactness we know that we can rely.

All that has reached us of the character and conduct of this prophet, shows that, in respect of wisdom and a holy life, he is well worthy to be a messenger of God; but what his purposes truly are, we cannot pretend as yet to determine. I say that we cannot; for ourselves, who have so espoused the cause of Herod, we cannot hastily, nor without the strongest reasons, abandon it for another. To him who should appear and afford proof sufficient by the signs he gave that he was the Messiah of God, should we without hesitation or delay transfer ourselves; but no such signs have as yet been given. In the meantime, we remain steadfast to him who seems well able to accomplish all the objects, or the greatest which are expected of that personage; nor do we think it an event to be looked for, from present appearances, that Jesus will show himself more than a prophet; yet we cannot tell. Though we cannot quite share the excessive transports of the people, we hold ourselves

silent and attentive to what shall come to pass. We are filled with amazement at what we hear, and pretend not to say what shall or what shall not be the issue. As surely as the presence of God was manifested of old by Moses and Elijah, so surely is it now by Jesus; of this all see the evidence, Pharisee and Sadducee, Jew and Samaritan.

Judith is made happy beyond all others, as it seems to me, by this coming of Jesus, and by the things we every day hear concerning him, and his teachings, and his works. She will not doubt that he will prove all we can desire, and hardly can she be restrained from journeying to Galilee, that she may herself hear, see, and judge; but though she cannot see and listen for herself, she can scarcely converse of any other subject.

"Ah! Julian," said she, as we were lately seated on the housetop as the day was declining, "how glad I am that anything has happened to separate you, even though but for a season, and in part, from that bad man."

"And whom do you mean, my cousin?" said I.

"Could I mean any one," she replied, "besides Herod?"

"He is not perfect," said I, "yet as God works his designs by storms, pestilence, and whirlwinds, so may he by demons and bad men."

"I believe," replied Judith, "that he does indeed use men's wickedness for some ends, so that even from this, the darkest evil, somewhat beneficial springs; but who can believe that for this Messiah, promised so long, a man like Herod would be chosen?"

"None of the wise men of Israel," I answered, "can tell me, nor have I been able from any quarter to learn with certainty, what sort of a personage the looked-for Messiah is to be. Some say he is to be a prophet, and some a king, and some both; and besides these, a priest; the only thing in which they agree is, that he is to be a conqueror, and deliver

Israel from her slavery ; I know not, therefore, what to make of him with exactness. But if the only belief in which they unite is any guide, then is there some good reason for thinking well of Herod, seeing that already he stands so, that with but little doubt he may work out the deliverance of Judea. Though we should not judge him Messiah, why may we not judge of him as one who may avail, like the Maccabees, to save our land from the spoiler ?”

“ You do not then, Julian, believe Herod to be the Christ ?”

“ To confess the truth,” I replied, “ I do not. I believe he may do great good to Judea ; that he stands with his harness on, ready, if the people will aid him, to accomplish the very work which by all is looked for from the Messiah ; but I do not believe he is therefore that person. I will give him my service as a Jew, as I would enlist under a general in the Roman camp ; but no more.”

“ I joy to find it is so,” said Judith ; “ I, too, may believe as much ; though to speak to you a truth, which, were it spoken in Beth-Harem or Jerusalem, would bring down heavy judgments, I verily think that under Rome we enjoy as much of both freedom and peace as we should do under princes of our own—as we should were Herod king of Israel, instead of Tiberius and Pilate. Ah ! I should tremble were Herod king. I have seen him once, and once has he spoken to me ; but I would not think of that. Others, however, though not yourself, believe him Messiah !—a man spotted with many crimes, and who will be with many more—a man both crafty and cruel—a fox and a tiger. I wonder at the delusion, and, above all, that Onias should have bound himself by so many ties to him.”

“ Onias,” I replied, “ like most of our people, is ruled by one idea and one hope—the deliverance of Judea ; and after many disappointments, after waiting so long in vain for the coming of the prince who was to work

out the deliverance, and beholding no signs of his approach, notwithstanding that, according to the interpretations of our rabbis and priests, the time has more than arrived when, if prophecy be more than a fable, he ought to arise, it surely is not surprising that he should be willing to fall back upon Herod, in whom, it must be confessed by the most hostile, there are centred many of the claims which would characterise the Messiah. For myself, I marvel that greater numbers ere this have not sought to him as their only hope. Even the Herodians themselves are, many of them, but lukewarm adherents, especially those of Cæsarea, who seem to be content with their present relations to him, and his opinions, and customs, and doubt the wisdom of the attempt now in hand. In truth, it was only among the smaller portion of them that the tetrarch, with all his secret endeavours, had succeeded in planting the seeds of a firm faith in his pretensions; but no other so sure hope can I discern in the wide future for Israel as that which at this moment rests on Herod."

"Can you," asked Judith, "see none in Jesus? Surely the seal of Jehovah is upon him?"

"I know not at present," I replied, "what nor who he is, nor what he will prove; I have with sincerity sworn allegiance to Herod; I cannot at once, nor without better reasons than can as yet be given, transfer it to Jesus."

"But, Julian, can he whose baptism was marked by so great an event as the opened heavens, whose birth was announced by angels, and by whose power miracles have been wrought in Galilee, great as ever came from a prophet's hand, be other than He for whom we look?"

Before I could answer Judith's question, Onias, with Shammai, Zadok, and other of our friends from Beth-Harem, joined us.

"Ah! my daughter," said Shammai, as he placed himself by the side of Judith, "I am glad to see thee

in these days of promise; days too, happily, that join in one those who differ. Even Zadok smiles now when I do."

"Not quite as often, I trust, Shammai," he replied. "Were it so, I should scarce think myself in my place at the synagogue; remembering what Solomon saith of laughter."

"Nay, now, my brother," replied Shammai, "take me not up so sharply; I would only have said that at length Zadok and Shammai smiled at the same time and thing. I will grant that for once thou hast smiled I have laughed a hundred times; but of what did you converse, daughter, with our young Roman as we came up?"

"Of what should it have been?" said Judith: "we converse now but of one and the same theme."

"Of Jesus you mean."

"Yes, of Jesus."

"It is, indeed, the only theme as thou hast said," replied Shammai. "In the city it is so; whether you meet in your walks those of one sect, employment, condition of life, or another, it is still the same words you hear from every mouth, and one hopeful eye you behold in every countenance; even children and slaves have caught the general joy, and utter the name of the prophet as if it were a charm to keep them from evil—and with reason."

"They are a foolish people," said Zadok, "and easily seduced as ever. I marvel, Shammai, that thou shouldst encourage them in their folly; they may soon have to sing another song."

"Why, thou thyself," said the ruler, "hast been little less stirred than I by the news from Galilee. Why silence the song others would sing in their joy?"

"I rejoice," replied the other, "as one whose joy may speedily be turned into mourning. It is not impossible that Jesus may be the Christ; but what can we say more?"

"Surely," replied Shammai, "it is not certain that

he now is, or that he will be; yet is there such a hope as Israel was never before permitted to entertain, and in that hope let all be glad who will. Say you not so, my daughter?"

"Indeed I do, rabbi; I had just said to Julian as you ascended and joined us, that it was no small token to us that this Jesus of Galilee is the fulfilment of our hope, in that his birth was so announced; that at his baptism the very heavens were opened, and the voice of Jehovah, or of his angel, was heard; and that he hath power to do the works which are filling the land with astonishment. Who else should he be?"

"Could the voice of the whole land of Judea this moment be heard," replied Shammai, "it would say with thee, lady, who else should he be? The people are waiting and ready to hail him king, prophet, deliverer; leaving every other ruler, they would now at his word flock together, and under his supremacy, lay the deep foundations of that kingdom of God of which there shall be no end; yet, Judith, are there some things that cause a doubt."

"Yea, verily, that there are," said Zadok.

"But still," said Shammai, "none to extinguish hope."

"Wait for that," said Zadok, "until to-morrow."

"I will wait longer," said Shammai.

"I am ready," said Judith, "to believe even now; I see no room for doubt. The reports which have come to our ears are by the lips of those whom we know; why should I not believe?"

"Believe what, my child?" asked Shammai.

Judith hesitated; but said, after a moment's pause, "Believe in him as one whom God has sent to instruct us, and why not also to save us from our enemies? Messiah, we are taught, will be a prophet and priest, as well as king."

"Doubtless it is so," said the ruler; "and it may not be denied that thus far Jesus has shown himself

possessed of the wisdom of a prophet, and of the holiness of a priest; but no signs has he given of the greatness of a prince."

"Not," asked Judith, "in his miracles? Who should do a miracle but one who comes from God? and is not every greatness his?"

"True, daughter, there are those who pretend to do wonders like these of Jesus, but a wise man receives them not; to God alone belongs such power; but surely it has been imparted to many who were not Messiali, and may be to many more. His works show God to be with this Jesus of Nazareth, but they show him not to be the Christ."

"Spoken like the king of wisdom himself," said Zadok; "yet is there a remnant of folly to be rebuked. Works great as these of Jesus can Pharez do, and many a magian and Egyptian besides: who knows not that these have power to foretell things to come, to expel demons, to call forth spirits from the air, the ocean, and the grave? The sorceress of Endor has left those behind who can do her own deeds and more."

"So," replied Shammai, "do the ignorant believe, but so do not the wise; they are liars, deceivers, impostors all; and the people fools and blind who put their trust in them. Who knows not how their tricks are done? even like those of her of Endor; in the terrors of darkness and the night, in hollow caves of the earth, in tombs, and on blasted heaths, amidst sulphurous flames and burning pitch, the yells of tortured men and beasts, where no eye can see aright, nor ear hear, and the soul is dissolved in the terrors of the scene: what wonder if so the dead may be reported to have arisen, and spirits to have come forth at a word?"

"The works of Jesus," said Judith, "are not like these."

"Truly they are not," said Shammai, "but are done in the open light of day and in the streets of

our cities, in the midst of watching crowds, with some Zadok ever nigh at hand. They who are sick he restores; they who are blind he causes to see; those whose limbs are withered and dead he makes whole as before, who all live and are among us to bear testimony to what has been done, as well as others who stood by and were witnesses of such deeds; these wonders, therefore—who shall deny it?—show him to be of God.”

“Yet show him not to be the Christ,” said Zadok, “nor as I believe, and shall believe, not with certainty to be of God, but with much likelihood of the devil.”

“Blaspheme not,” said Onias; “thou knowest not whereof thou affirmest. If ever the God of our nation has appeared for us, if he indeed thundered with his voice at Sinai, or gave his spirit to Moses and Elias, then has he given it also unto Jesus. He is a prophet mighty in his power, even like unto them; what he is more than this, we know not yet, but we shall know soon; but we may hope that he shall prove a redeemer for Israel; and saying this, I forget not Herod, nor our duty to him. I am his; but we know well that upon Herod rests no spirit like unto this that manifests itself in Jesus. He cannot in this be what Jesus is, while Jesus can be what Herod is, and more. It is no treason to say so: when and where God, the God of our fathers, reveals his hand and presence, there should his children, forsaking all others, cleave to him alone; others are set aside. Let Jesus, therefore, declare himself Messiah, and use his powers to achieve Messiah’s work, and we then muster under his banner, as under one whom God himself hath anointed; and to such a one do I believe would Herod himself show allegiance.”

“I thank thee, my father, for these words,” said Judith; “thou wilt wait then. I feared——”

“Fear nothing,” said Onias; “least of all that I shall in anything turn a deaf ear to the evident voice of Jehovah. I look to Jesus with hope, as doth every

one in Israel whose heart is right before God, and I wait to see what a few more days or weeks shall bring forth."

"Yet the people do everywhere hold him," said Judith, "to be not only a prophet, but the Christ also. The voice of a people, is it not the voice of God?"

"The people," replied Onias, "believe hastily and without reason, as their passions lead them; and then again oftentimes with as little reason deny and reject what a moment before they believed, as new passions dictate. No; the voice of the wise man, if it may be affirmed of any, is rather the voice of God. Solomon, David, and the prophets, rather than the multitudes of their day, spake with the warrant of Jehovah. When Jesus shall declare himself, and put forth his powers in the great work God shall have given him to do, will it be time enough to own him Christ: the people, in their shoutings and acclamations, in their ready faith and promises, are as the blind rushing towards the edge of a precipice; they know not whither they go, and it may be towards their ruin; yet also it may be towards their salvation."

"Yea," said Zadok, "it is not more hours than one can easily reckon up, that this same people deemed John some great one, and now he is forsaken for Jesus; and to-morrow let a third arise, and Jesus will be forsaken in turn."

"That," said Onias, "is true, Zadok; but in respect of what thou hast said of John, as I learn, his disciples abandon him not, but cleave to him, holding him greater and better than Jesus."

"I know not how his followers judge either of him or Jesus," replied the Pharisee, "but the people, of whom we were speaking, while but now they thronged John wheresoever he moved, now speak the truth of him—the truth at first, as well as the truth now—and say that he is as one beside himself, seeing that he dwells apart in the manner he does, feeds upon the

wild fruits and berries of the wilderness, and for his clothing wears the garments of a beggar. Doubt not, that presently they shall say yet worse things of Jesus; nay, that they do already, marvelling if he can be a Son of God who eats and drinks as others do, consorts with publicans and sinners, and by the power of God makes wine of water, that he and others with him may drink at will."

"Are such things reported?" asked Judith.

"It must be said that they are," replied Zadok; "and already among those who follow him doth it beget shrewd suspicions of whence he comes, and of the true spirit that inspireth him."

"Oh! say not so, rabbi," cried Judith; "say not so. All that has thus far come to our ears speaks of him as gentle and holy; this is but the jealousy of a Herodian—admit it, Zadok."

"As a follower of Herod," replied Zadok, "I profess not to love either him or John; that thou knowest, daughter. But in respect of what I have just said, I utter it not of my own knowledge, but speak only the common rumour."

"Common rumour," I said, "changes its hue and quality, however, even as water, according to the nature of that through which it passes. Thou wouldst not take as justly exact a rumour concerning John from the lips of Herod, nor can we any more one from Zadok concerning Jesus."

"We shall see," replied the priest; "time will show; only, as I think, there will be found to be even less of Christ in Jesus than in John; but in neither what should throw a stumblingblock so big as a midge's wing in the way of Antipas."

"Let us not," said Onias, "be over-confident, nor judge beforehand. Who would willingly be found to fight against God?"

"As to what is said of the life and manner of the prophet," said Shammai, "it surely matters little one way or another. If the Messiah drink wine, it would

make it hard for one to say why that should hurt him in the eye of the nation; and if he keep company with publicans, and those who are little better, it were not easy to see how he should consort with many, and not do so. A holy Jew must be sought for narrowly to be found. He who is to be gathering armies and laying the foundations of a new kingdom, will hardly employ himself in choosing nicely his company. As thou sayest, Onias, let us not judge beforehand, nor make mountains of ant-hills; let us not pry into his secret life, searching for rents and spots of uncleanness; it matters not; it matters not. To be a busybody is worse than to be a sinner, and to judge bitterly, worse than to be, or be called, a child of the devil."

So we conversed until the hour of retiring, when our visitors took their leave and returned to Beth-Harem.

When they were gone, Onias, as is his wont, called together his household for the evening prayer. Morning and evening he worships God, surrounded by all who dwell beneath his roof, pouring forth the wants and desires of his heart concerning his own and concerning Israel. This night, standing on the house-top, in the midst of his large family, the air being calm, the stars shining bright in the firmament, and no sound heard but the low music of innumerable insects, and the distant murmuring of the Jordan, he prayed with an earnestness more than common. His voice, not loud but deep, and bearing upwards not only so many words, but the very soul of him who spake them, fell upon the ear as the voice of one more than man. When he had prayed for his own, and for thee, my mother, and for all in any sort bound to him, and for other things, with somewhat of that repetition to be noted in the devotions of all of this sect, he then prayed for Judea, for her peace, prosperity, and deliverance: "Make haste to help us, O Lord, make haste to appear for us, and with thy strong arm to cause us to stand, for we are now fallen

to the ground and buried in the dust of the earth, and sunk into the deep mire, and overwhelmed beneath mighty waters, so that we are of no account in the sight of men; verily they hoot at us, shooting out the lip, and laughing us to scorn as they pass by, saying, where is thy helper, Israel, and thy Gods, O Jacob? And truly, O Lord, it is not as it was wont to be of old with thy people, when thy servant David sat on thy glorious throne, and the inhabitants of the earth trembled and fled from before him astonished. Then was thy people as the chosen of the Lord; then each sat beneath his own vine and fig-tree, and the Gentile, who is accursed for ever, licked the dust at our feet. But now we are had in derision; our enemies have risen up against us and hold us in bondage; the yoke is upon our neck, our feet are in the stocks, our wine and oil, the fruit of the field, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, they are not for us, but the oppressor devoureth them before our eyes; and for our wives and our little ones, their skin cleaveth to their bones, and their substance is carried away, and the stranger and alien has gotten possession thereof. By reason of these things, O Lord, thy people are full of sighings and tears; we sit beneath the willows whereon we have hung our harps of pleasant sound, and bewail and lament. How long, O Lord! how long wilt thou cause us to wait? How long before we shall see our desires accomplished upon those whom we hate? How long before thy wrath shall be poured out upon our enemies and consume them from the face of the earth, so that men shall seek them and shall not find them, and the smoke of their ruin, and the stench of their corruption, shall alone declare the place where once stood the cities of their pride, and dwelt the multitudes of their inhabitants. Consume them quickly in thy wrath, O God, and in thine anger cause them to perish. Let thy enemies, and the enemies of Jacob, flee before the face of thine anointed, and the kingdom be again given to Israel. Now is the set time, O Lord;

the set time, the time for the redemption of Judah and the reign of Israel. Give us to know him whom thou shalt send. Let not our eyes be blind when the messenger of the covenant shall suddenly appear; let not our hearts be hard nor our ears dull of hearing; make the signs to be plainly discerned, even in the broad face of the heavens, that shall proclaim the King of Israel; and may the people quickly gather themselves unto him, with their swords girded upon their loins, with bows, and javelins, and spears, to take vengeance upon the oppressor, and bring deliverance to the captive. May thy kingdom come, even now, O Lord, that the eyes of thy servant may behold it, and may there be no tarrying. Show us him whom thou hast sealed, on whom thou hast set thy name, whom thou hast called thy Son, Son of David, King of Israel, Saviour of Judah, Redeemer of Jacob, the Anointed. Light hath arisen, O Lord, upon our land, but our hearts are divided, our minds are in doubt and amazement: scatter the clouds, and let us see plainly in whom thou wouldst have us to trust, and where is the hiding of thy power. If it be in thy servant Jesus, and in no other, or in John, and no other, or in Herod, and no other, cause that he quickly array himself in his royal robes, and crown himself with his royal diadem, and sit upon the throne of his fathers, so that we may know him, and that unto him there shall be a gathering of the people; then upon our enemies shall there fall blasting and mildew, and a curse and utter destruction before the face of thy Lord; and the kingdom of God shall be established, it shall be unto the ends of the earth, and there shall be no other."

These and other like things did Onias pour forth in his prayer; and truly, if prayers be answered according to the faith and truth of those who make them, then will the petitions of thy brother be fulfilled, for his words are things, rather than their names and shadows only. What he says, is as a thing done, having its force and reality.

As we descended from the house-top to the lower apartments of the house, Judith desired to speak with me ; but when we had withdrawn to the portico, she deferred still to some other time that which she wished to communicate, and together with the rest of the household we also retired.

The earnest manner of Judith, while at the same time she lightly postponed the interview which a moment before she had sought, led me not with doubt or difficulty to conjecture what it was that would have been the burden of her discourse. As I have already said to thee, my mother, she is beloved of the noble Roman Saturninus, and by her is he in turn equally beloved, and well are they worthy each of the regards of the other ; but the bar which their religions raise between them appears insurmountable. In Rome, indeed, as thou knowest, it is not seldom overleaped, and the Roman and the Jew are joined together. So too, in Judea, are these differences overcome on the part of many, especially in those places where the introduction of Roman usages and the Roman tongue, with Roman inhabitants, has helped to bring the two people into a nearer intercourse and a better knowledge of each other ; they have in this manner discovered, what else they might for ever have remained ignorant of, that, save in name, and in other matters not less accidental, they have been made by the Father of all much alike ; that a Roman heart is much like a Jewish heart, a Roman nature much like a Jewish ; that a man is a man, and a woman a woman, notwithstanding name, country, religion, and outward beauty or ugliness ; and that the things in which they are the same outweigh, by an immense preponderance, those wherein they are different ; so that in such circumstances, in spite of the outcries of many, and the prejudices inherited from ancient customs, the Jews, and natives of Rome, and other countries, have obeyed the instincts which have directed their affections to each other ; yet are there many, very many, who

would by no means give way to such affections in themselves, nor permit it in a child ; and of such is Onias.

The regard which at first he conceived for Saturninus, led him to extend towards him hospitalities and a friendship rare in a Jew towards an alien, and which have brought upon him, in no light measure, the rebukes of the more strict ; but had he foreseen the consequences, sooner would he have sacrificed his life, I believe, than have done aught to provoke them. He relied, doubtless, on the natural hatred of the Jew for the Roman, to defend his daughter, as himself, from any nearer intercourse than the distant one allowed by the most formal observances of society. Alas ! how vain the reliance : love laughs such barriers to scorn ; it is free of country, religion, and the wide world. Nevertheless, what shall Onias do or say ? Only one thing possibly. Never would thy stern yet loving brother, that Jew of Jews, that hater of the Gentile, surrender her to a Roman. How will Zadok now, and such as he, gall the spirit of Onias by their harsh constructions ; how will they charge this issue as a judgment of God upon him for his looseness in receiving the heathen to his board. Yet in Shammai will he find a gentle adviser and friend, and so too will Judith, and one no less confiding, in Julian.

I thank thee, my mother, for thy late full supplies of Roman news. Surely Sejanus must have been made blind by the gods not to perceive the significance of such conduct and such language in Tiberius ; yet perhaps it is but the blindness which a low ambition and a wicked selfishness inflicts necessarily upon itself. He has gazed upon his own dazzling fortunes so long, that eyesight is gone for other things. Grim and deadly as Tiberius stands before him, he sees him not ; nor any better can he hear the low but heavy rumbling, as of an earthquake, of a nation's discontent—of that vast multitude whom he has injured in themselves, their friends, or their fortunes, and

who now begin to perceive that the emperor is also on their side, and one tyrant may be set against the other. That were a sight truly grateful, to behold either of those who have glutted their fatal appetite on so many innocent, at length falling into the bloody fangs of the other ; such a fate seems likely enough to befall Sejanus, yet, after all, he may first spring upon Tiberius.

You say that little heed is given among our people in Rome to the rumours which have reached it of Jesus, and you yourself show not by your replies that your own concern is much deeper. Judith marvels at this. I do not ; seeing that the accounts which have reached you of Jesus are none of them such as agree with the prevailing hopes of the expected deliverer. Jesus having given no sign by which to judge him, save his miracles, I marvel not at all that you in Rome at once rank him with those who, by the arts of magic, and credulity on the part of the multitude, have a thousand times deluded the nation. The wonders which are ascribed to Jesus cause him naturally, where there is no opportunity of a careful examination and comparison, to be put but on a level with sorcerers and exorcists, of whom the world is full ; but I am clearly persuaded, my mother, that there is something more in what is now taking place than you and others in Rome dream of—widely different from what has been witnessed before, either here or elsewhere. For the works of a wonderful kind, which are related of Jesus, are in their nature, and the manner in which they are performed, so different from such as are done by magicians, that all who have witnessed them declare with one voice, they can be performed by no other power than that of God. Pharisee and Sadducee, Jew and Samaritan, all agree in bearing this testimony ; they doubt not that he is indeed a prophet, filled for some purpose, not as yet known or by him declared, with the spirit and power of Jehovah ; but besides this, it is affirmed

that his teachings are such as declare him to be of God, not less or more than his miracles; that his character is every way admirable, and his life holy beyond the measure of other men. Can we doubt that he will presently show himself to be more than a prophet? It will not be long, therefore, as I judge, ere you in Rome and in other distant places will, even as they who are here present, be curious to learn all that is to be known of this strange person. As you will yourself, my mother, be more and more desirous of further intelligence, just in the proportion to that which I shall send you—for where was there ever goodness in which you felt not interest?—I shall take all pains to keep you informed of whatever there is worthy of trust that comes to my ear. I cannot well judge myself what shall be its issue; but shall, I confess, be amazed if so much do not result as shall fill with astonishment not only Judea but Rome also.

Remember me with affection to the members of our household, and to my fellow-travellers.

LETTER XVIII.

THIS, my mother, reaches you from Tiberias, whither I am come at the command of Herod.

It is many weeks since I last wrote. As we are now suffering under the fervours of a summer's sun, I grieve not that I am perforce on the shores of this inland sea, over which the winds as they sweep are deprived of a portion of that burning heat they bring with them from the Asiatic deserts.

A few days only had passed after I had despatched my last letter, when, by a messenger from this place, I was summoned to attend the tetrarch; and Onias at the same time left Beth-Harem for the western shores of the Dead Sea and the region of Idumea. I was by no means sorry to be thus drawn away from Beth-Harem, from which, owing to the manner in which I

have bound myself to both Onias and Herod, I have not been at liberty to depart, as I had intended to do from time to time, that I might see more of the country and the inhabitants.

On my way to Tiberias, I passed through a long stretch of the valley of the Jordan, giving to the eye of the traveller a succession of scenes similar to those on its banks in the neighbourhood of Beth-Harem and Bethabara. The Lake of Genessareth greeted the sight with a wide prospect of beauty, as on a short turn of the river it suddenly opened upon me, lying quiet and calm in the bosom of hills running along on the eastern and western shores, the loftier mountains of Lebanon showing their snow-clad summits in the north. Immediately on gaining the borders of the lake, Tiberias rose to view on its western side—a large city encompassed by lofty walls, the buildings rising as they retreat towards the mountains, one above another, and overlooking the whole extent of the lake. Hither I directed my steps, but learned that the palace of the tetrarch, in which he chiefly resides, is at a little distance without the walls, covering a small eminence that commands a view of the city and of the water.

I doubt not, my mother, you have wondered not a little that I have continued thus to unite myself to the service of Herod, for whom in various letters I have expressed but slight regard. I have been surprised myself at times at my own position and relations toward him ; to that degree, indeed, that I could not find any explanation but in the persuasion that we are led towards the ends that are best by a providence whose designs we cannot penetrate, whom we can serve only by submitting to its controlling and guiding force. I have faltered, I confess, in my purposes more than once ; for, notwithstanding the deep convictions and lofty praises bestowed by Onias and Zadok upon the tetrarch, I have felt inclined to put more confidence in the results I have myself

arrived at concerning him, in spite of my comparatively narrow opportunities of observing and studying his character. Still, while any darkness or doubt remained, I was willing to seek him once more, that if it were possible by further communications it might be removed.

Upon announcing myself at the palace gate as desirous to see the tetrarch, I was conducted to an apartment where I found Chuza, the steward, who received me courteously, as one whom he had known before at Machærus, and was aware of my relations to Herod. Joanna, the wife of Chuza, sat at an open window plying busily her needle, while a little child pursued its sports at her side. The mother raised her head as I entered, revealing a countenance sad, and exhibiting traces of recent tears; yet she received me with a smile, and bade me welcome, as Chuza named me, to the palace. Upon inquiring for the tetrarch, I was told he was then absent upon the lake, but would soon return.

"In the meantime," said Joanna, "be pleased to rest here where the air comes cool from the water, and the approach of the king can be seen."

"You have of late had another king, as some esteem him, upon these waters," I observed to Chuza.

"Ay," he answered; "that is, at the other end of the lake, in the region of Capernaum; he hath made there a great stir, and indeed among the people here also, many having followed him even from Tiberias. Had he drawn nearer to us, I fear lest the palace itself had sustained losses."

"And may even yet," said Joanna in a low voice, as if speaking rather to herself than replying to her husband.

"There it is," exclaimed Chuza, "there it is; as thou seest, sir, all the people are beside themselves—towns emptied, cities in confusion, the husbandman forsaking the field, the housewife her distaff, families

divided among themselves, all for this—how shall we name him?”

“Name him as yet,” said his wife, “no otherwise than reverently; for, as I have said, neither thou, nor I, nor any one, knows what or who he may be; yet of one thing are we even now doubly assured, that he is a wise and righteous man.”

“But,” said her husband, “suppose he draw from Chuza his wife Joanna; how, and what then?”

“Then,” said Joanna, “let Chuza follow.”

“Not so, not so,” cried the steward; “I leave not what is for what only may be; nor shall Joanna, if she will be ruled by realities instead of dreams.”

“It is no dream,” said his wife, “that the words of Jesus are like those of no other, that he speaks as none of the priests or scribes ever do, and that he performs wonders which those only can whom God inspires, and by his life and virtues fills those who draw near with an awe and a love such as are felt towards no other.”

“Nay,” replied Chuza, “all that may be real and no dream; thou hast seen and heard thyself, and who shall deny the truth of what Joanna the daughter of Phasaël affirms? Yet still may it be declared that all this woven together makes but a weak and insufficient reason for doing as so many have done and are doing; for that there will, as I have constantly affirmed, be time enough, and more than enough, when he shall more plainly have declared himself.”

“Thou seest,” said Joanna, “that I am content to wait.”

“Thou art the very best of wives,” cried Chuza, “and in saying so, I forget not our great mistress.” As he ended, he snatched up the little child, who had run towards him, and kissed it vehemently, as the best substitute, he could find near at hand and in the presence of others, of its young mother.

I was rejoiced to meet with one who had both seen

and heard Jesus, and eagerly approached her to obtain some better knowledge than I had been able as yet to find access to concerning him, when Chuza exclaimed—

“See! the tetrarch comes; his boat is already at the shore.”

I looked as he directed, and saw the boat of many banks of oars making rapidly toward the quay. In a moment more Herod was seen ascending toward the palace.

Learning immediately that I had arrived, he desired my attendance. Herod on receiving me appeared not quite at his ease, as remembering the conversations that on my visit at Machærus had passed between us; yet did he so far overcome his feelings as to greet me with affability, and bid me heartily welcome to Tibcrias, presenting me at the same time to some who stood with him.

“The present posture of our affairs, my young Roman,” said he, “is far enough off from what at Machærus we promised ourselves it would be by this hour.”

“It is so, indeed,” I answered; “yet it seems to be so in no wise as a consequence of any error on our part. We cannot control the sun in the heavens; but still less the minds and hearts of men.”

“Ah,” he quickly rejoined, “they are not for thrones who know not to turn the hearts of the people as they will, and who keep not, moreover, their own counsels. By the soul of my father I have come to think of myself but as of a common man since the day I held by the judgment of Onias and a young stripling of Rome, rather than my own. Had John been then closely mewed up, we had now been far on to the end of our enterprise. Now not only is he at large, still poisoning the minds of men, but another is sprung up of the same sort, save that he carries away the people even more than the first; for one to deal with, there are now two.”

I asked if he himself had seen Jesus, so as to form any judgment concerning him.

"I have not seen him, though I have desired to do so. While he was on the upper shores of the lake, I was at Machærus. But he draws many after him, and astonishes them by his miracles—so all report to me, and all cannot be deceived. How sayest thou Jaddua?" turning to a doctor of the law who stood near him.

"Doubtless," said the rabbi, "it was at first thought to be as your mightiness has said; there were wonderful works done by his hand, which verily seemed to be done by the power of God given to him as of old to Moses and Elias, and the people being all in expectation, flocked about him, but with their eyes blinded because of such expectation, and incapable of judgment. But Jesus having been a long time among them, the blindness is now in part removed; and he whom so hastily they took for a great one, they already begin to doubt."

"Ah, it is just as I have said," cried Herod; "I knew it would be with him as with John. They thronged the Baptist awhile—now he is forsaken, save by a few, for Jesus; and to-morrow Jesus will in turn be abandoned. Sees not Onias, Julian, his folly? What is there here to cast an obstacle so thick as one's finger in our way?"

I said I still thought that, whether deceived or not, the people were at present even too much distracted by the strange events of the time to be approached with much prospect of success; yet if it be true, as the learned scribe hath reported, that already those who follow him begin to doubt him, the day could not be far off that he might resume his undertaking.

"It can be no otherwise," said Jaddua, "than that the people should fall away from him, for verily, though they have sought to him so long, what hath come of it? He still, as at first, wanders about on foot, consorting not with the great and the learned of

the land, with the rulers and the chief priests, but with the common people, just as they happen to throng him ; and in his teaching casts contempt upon the law, its ministers, and its rites. Here, say the wiser, be few signs of the Christ, and we leave him with those who have eyes to see farther than ours ; mayhap beggars and outcasts, publicans and sinners, of the Gentiles, may behold the son of David where we can see only a besotted son of man, or child of the devil."

"Yet," I asked, "they who doubt are, as I have heard, very few to the multitudes who still believe?"

"Ah," said Jaddua, "the multitude is easily led ; feed them, only feed them, which Jesus does, and beside that, please their love of wonders, and their friendship is secured ; doubtless the most part for such reasons do still believe, and so throng him ; but they who look toward the future, and think not of themselves, but of the salvation of Israel, begin to draw back, or are in doubt ; they see before them, indeed, in Jesus, one whom they cannot fully comprehend or explain, but they see not the Christ."

"Truly," said the tetrarch, "I can discover in this Jesus of Nazareth, from all the reports that reach my ear, no qualities or purposes that should cause hesitation or delay in our enterprise. He seems thus far to be a mild and peaceable man, concerning himself not at all, as doth John, with public affairs and things that are above him ; but with more wisdom, devoting himself to the instruction of the common people, and to the performance of works of charity and mercy, however the power by which he does them may be derived—whether from the God of Abraham, or the God of the Sidonians. If there be still great numbers, who in their stupidity persist in the belief that he is or will prove to be the Christ, he himself truly appears to be possessed of more reason, and giveth no encouragement to such madness, affecting no state, and making no promises even, so we hear, to his nearest

followers. This man we may well let alone; nay, if it be true that he assaileth the law and the Pharisees, and impugneth the spotless righteousness of their lives, it will go hard but the priests and the council will see after him, and serve us better than we could serve ourselves. Say we not right, Jaddua?"

"I would not that aught should be done in haste," replied the scribe; "but, as I trow, should all prove to be true that we hear, I think, and I trust that those of whom thou speakest will see to it, that his career shall be a short one. There be those yet among both rulers and people—glory be to the God of our fathers—who love the law, and will not see it assailed or stained by so much as a word or a breath of reproach, but they will stand forth to stone the blasphemer unto death."

"I doubt it not," said Herod, "our subjects are loyal toward not us alone, but the law also; and such a people shall be blessed of the Lord and prosper. I fear not Jesus, nor any power he may win over the people, seeing the path he hath chosen to travel. He, I say, may be let alone; yet the insolence of John well deserveth punishment, and of his purposes there may be with reason more apprehension. His tongue is as a scourge of scorpions that falleth alike on all; we, even, escape not, but he whips us before the people for our sins, as he counteth them, as any beggar of them all. Let him look to himself. By the soul of my father but it were a good deed to hang him in his own girdle. What think you, Jaddua?"

"As a busybody, an intermeddler, a despiser of authorities, and one moreover who casteth dirt upon our holy order," answered the scribe, "and aimeth to bring the excellent and the holy into contempt with the people, doth he well deserve the favour thou wouldst bestow upon him. The rabble truly affect him, and doubtless would clamour; but who are they to stand between the law and its victim?"

I said that I did not believe John could be touched

with advantage or safety. The people hold him to be a prophet, and conceive besides that he is their defender and shield against the priesthood, the Pharisees, and the mighty in the land, whom he assails in his preaching, and accuseth openly of the hypocrisies and iniquities which all men know to lie at their door, but which none save he is bold enough to charge upon them. Such charges the people know to be just, as doth every one who hath the natural sight of a man.

By the sudden expression of Herod's countenance I could easily perceive that he secretly enjoyed what I confess I said without so much as thinking of Jaddua, and the presence of some priests who stood with him. He turned to them as they were ready to break out with indignation, and said—"By the beard of Aaron! but this youth is little more civil toward the holy priesthood than John himself. We must beg you, fathers, to pardon his ignorance, seeing he hath but of late come into our kingdom, and seeing, moreover, he is hardly yet arrived at years of wisdom. We will advise him in private, and do what in us lies to inspire him with due reverence toward the ministers of the law, whose lives should be as spotless, yea, and are doubtless, as their robes."

Saying this he motioned to them to withdraw, which they did with countenances inflamed with rage, putting unwilling restraint upon their tongues.

Soon as they were withdrawn and beyond the reach of our voices, Herod broke into loud laughter, amusing himself greatly with their looks of astonishment at hearing themselves so berated in the very presence of the tetrarch. "The knaves," said he, as soon as he could cease from his laughter, "they have for once heard the truth in the king's presence, or rather some small portion of it. Though we reprove them not ourselves, it being needful to secure their good opinion, yet we know them well, and were well content to behold them writhing under the scourge thou didst lay on: would it had been with the scor-

pion lash they so well deserve. But I saw why thy hand was stayed."

Calling upon me then to follow him, we left the more public room where we had been conversing, for one more private, into which none are admitted but the partners of his most secret counsels.

When we were seated in this more private apartment, Herod asked with particularity after Onias, and, said he, "that bright flower of the Jordan, Judith; how fares the damsel? well worthy for her beauty to be queen of Judea, Rome, or the world."

I made slight, but, as I was bound to do, courteous answer, though I confess a pain at hearing her name from such lips; yet, perhaps, I do Herod injustice.

I need not relate, my mother, the conversations which now ensued upon all the subjects connected with the enterprise of Herod, the obstructions thrown in his way by the appearance of John and Jesus, and the probabilities concerning the success of Sejanus in Rome, and the aid to be derived from him. Of all the impediments, however, which oppose his movement, it is easy to see, notwithstanding the manner in which at first he had spoken of it, that he most fears the power of Jesus. He will not confess it before the Pharisees and the priests, but, seeing deeper than they, he apprehends lest, by those very virtues, and that humble and lowly manner of life, which to a dull sight seems to make him harmless, he should build for himself a foundation in the hearts of the people deeper than could have been laid in any other way, and too deep to be rooted up. "Although," he said, "I have not seen him, yet I have made the most diligent and exact inquiries, and to them all I have as yet received but the same answers, all of which go to prove that a man every way extraordinary hath arisen among us. His virtues and manner of life are such as secure the veneration of most of those who throng his steps, notwithstanding there be some who accuse him of excesses, and of hostility to the law; but these may

well be set down as calumnies of those who envy him, for when was there innocence or virtue without their detractors? His powers of healing and working other miracles, witnessed by so many, whether they be powers derived from our God or some other, or whether from magic, or the spirits who fill the earth and air, I cannot guess; nor can I tell, in truth, whether his life and character be sincerely exhibited or falsely for selfish purposes only. All I truly know, young Roman, is this, that he obtains sway over the people, and that each day thus far, as my spies inform me, doth it grow wider and wider. At the present time I confess my fears to have somewhat diminished, from what has even within a day been reported, that he had offended the Pharisees by the heat of his reproaches, and caused many to doubt his Messiahship by reason of the strange truths he preaches, which appear to those who follow his steps to be contradictory of the office and work expected of the Christ, and to make it impossible that with such opinions he should ever undertake them. Let him proceed in the same way, and at least the more powerful of the Pharisees, of the council, and of the nation, will be turned against him, being persuaded that he who can deride and condemn them, the very sinews of the nation, cannot be that Christ who is to exalt the nation. So far, accordingly, as these are concerned, they will work for us without the necessity of our interposing. Jesus himself will destroy himself. But, Julian, behind these who are the few, however powerful, there are the many—the stupid populace; this fiery headstrong rabble of the common people, whom to bridle, ride, and govern, asks the craft of the devil, and the strength of seven archangels; they are now beside themselves with their foolish worship of this man of Nazareth—our cities and our towns depopulated, while they run hither and thither, as they say, to hear his words in the synagogue, or by the roadside, but, as is more likely, to gape with idle

wonder, to gossip, and breed revolt. They doubt not—not they, O wise and far-seeing people!—that Jesus is their king, and by him, a mechanic-king, a low-born peasant monarch of their own base blood, they shall come to strange honours and liberties, they shall be slaves no more, but freemen of the soil, with a king over them or under them, of their own choosing, and Rome and the Herods at their feet. These, young Roman, are our real enemies, and until they are drawn off from these wild fancies, or Jesus is drawn from them, our purposes must halt, and our hands hang idle. And who am I to defer to this carpenter-king, holding back while he mounts where I should stand?”

He paused, and looked at me as if for a reply.

I said, “that I by no means wondered at the present enthusiasm of the people, but I was firmly persuaded that it would work its own cure. If Jesus,” I continued, “be in truth the Messiah by the appointment of God (certainly he is a prophet of great authority), then wilt thou, as well as I, and every loyal Hebrew, hasten to do him homage—Herod’s countenance grew dark—we can desire no other than to acknowledge him whom God shall send; the people will then be where we would have them. If he be not the true Messiah, the signs that should show him such will be wanting, and the people, deceived in their hopes, will fall away from him, first, doubtless, revenging themselves for their disappointment. In the meanwhile ——”

“Ay,” interrupted the tetrarch, “what in the meanwhile?”

“In the meanwhile,” I resumed, “I should counsel a patient waiting, that we may not be found possibly resisting the purposes of Jehovah; and such,” I added, “do I know to be the judgment of Onias.”

Herod’s lip curled with an expression of contempt as he said, “Verily, I think that you do all hold of the fair Judith, who, as I learn, is more than half a

believer in Jesus; and for herself, as I learn also, is a disciple of the holy Saturninus."

It seemed strange to me that Herod should have known even so much as this of the private thoughts of two persons so remote from him, and I could not but entertain the conviction that, for purposes of his own, he had informed himself, by a direct employment of secret means, of what could not have been easily known otherwise; yet it was possible also that he might have obtained all he knew by honest and proper channels; I therefore only replied, "That it was indeed true that the daughter of Onias looked with great hope to Jesus that he would prove himself both prophet and king; nay, though he were only prophet, she would not refuse to own him as the Christ, did other proofs conspire."

"Ah," said the king, "that comes of her Samaritan rearing; she is foolish as her ancestors, who, denying the prophets, who alone foreshow the Christ, are a people accursed. But, Julian, we stray from what we were saying. Lest then the people should cling too closely to Jesus, and overlook some of the reasons that may readily be urged against his claims, and lest the hindrances thrown in his way by the rulers and priests should not be sufficiently availing, it shall not be my fault if there be not thickly scattered over the land, wherever this Nazarene shall wander with his fishermen, those who shall sow in the minds of the people seed of another sort, and pluck up, as they may, what he hath planted, and stir into the mass of those whom he shall gather together a leaven, that shall cause it to move and heave, if not to my rising, to his falling. I might, perhaps, and with safety, as I just now said, leave this whole office to the Pharisees, priests, and to Jesus himself; it can hardly be doubtful to what issue events would come; but as it is a pleasure, in a remote retreat, still to use instruments by which, at a distance, great designs of others are rendered abortive, so I cannot wholly refrain from doing as I have hinted; but chiefly, you will not

doubt, Julian, that I am moved to such endeavours that thereby the great Jehovah may be honoured, the coming of the true kingdom of God be promoted and hastened, and those defeated who, without other authority than that of their own bewildered fancy, and the cries of a blinded populace, think to step in and thwart his purposes. While I live and reign, let me be true to the law, to the prophet who gave the law, and to God who gave the prophet."

I still ventured to urge a further delay, and on the ground, that as we could not know all the purposes and plans of Jehovah, so we could not feel sure that Jesus was not the Son of God, revealing himself to the people in the way not in which we had been taught to expect him, but in a way appointed by him who sent him. There were, indeed, as yet no marks of such a character and office to be seen in him, nor had he declared to any one that he had come as the Christ; but it was not to be denied that he was invested with divine powers, that he was already possessed of a portion of the spirit of God, which, truly, the people look for as making a part of what shall constitute their king; and who therefore can say that he may not, even yet, notwithstanding the present appearances, give those signs, whether in heaven or on earth, unequivocal and convincing, that shall prove him to be the Christ? He who can heal the sick, and convert water into wine, and to limbs withered and dead restore life and strength, and all by a word of the mouth, it is plain has only to exert the same power in other directions and to other ends, to stand before the people in a blaze of glory, the dispenser of honours and wealth, the leader of innumerable hosts, the resistless conqueror, before whose arm, nerved with the energy of God, and bearing the thunderbolts of the Omnipotent, earthly power, though that of Rome with all the world in league, would sink and fade as mists in the rays of the morning sun.

Herod seemed to be struck, as I spoke these things,

with their reasonableness ; and as I ended, I rejoiced to find him not too much wedded to his own opinion to say so.

“That is all possible,” he said ; “it cannot be denied it is all possible. Jesus may yet put forth an energy that has not been seen or suspected, and show himself to be all the nation is looking and asking for. We learn, too, that there is not only mildness, but dignity and greatness also in his carriage not unworthy a king.” Herod paused, and for a few moments remained buried in thought, but from his musing suddenly broke forth with vehemence—

“No, young man, no, it cannot be so ; this is all idle dreaming. A Nazarene mechanic, a carpenter, and the son of a carpenter, can never be king of Israel ; I fear him not. Prophet he may be, Elias he may be, but not the Christ. The work of Messiah is one—one chiefly, and for which there is little meetness in this lamb-like peasant of Galilee ; so too, I believe, the people will soon discover, as well as the scribes and priests. But enough of this ; let us now forth. I would show thee, Julian, that in Tiberias, not less than in Machærus, are there proofs, many and convincing, that the tetrarch of Galilee needs but to use the strength he has to be hailed king of Israel ! I will show thee the secret treasures of Tiberias.”

So saying, he called upon me to follow him, and leaving the palace for the city, we there entered the citadel, and in vaults, and secret apartments, and buildings, bearing without no signs of the purposes to which they were devoted, I beheld immense collections of all the implements of war.

“These,” said Herod, “with more than these in Sepphoris, are an ample supply for all the northern portion of the land, as those in Machærus and at Herodium are for all the southern. Let there be Jewish arms and hands to wield these instruments of death, with stout Jewish hearts behind these coats of mail, and the empire of Rome will quickly be at an

end, not in Syria alone, but the East. Yes, Julian, in the East. Not with more certainty will Sejanus reign in Rome than will Herod Antipas in Jerusalem ; and not with a wider sway will Sejanus stretch his sceptre over Europe and the West, than will Herod over Asia and the East. And that the last rivet may be driven into the compact that makes all this to be so, would I soon have thee, Julian, as hath been already agreed, hie thee to Rome ; there, with the knowledge which thou more than any other in Judea possessest, to complete what has been well begun. Sejanus, though no model of virtue, is yet, as I think, in public affairs to be trusted ; but if one may rarely trust himself, without some misgivings, much less surely may he another. Wherefore it will be thy more especial office, while in Rome, to contrive every most secret and unsuspected avenue to the soul of Sejanus, that his heart may be perfectly read, and the agreement or disagreement that exists between his words and his real purposes be discovered."

I said that all that could be done in honour to reach the designs of Sejanus I would not hesitate to attempt.

"In honour !" said Herod, "honour towards such as Sejanus ? Hath he observed such rules towards others ? and shall these come between a nation and its redemption ?"

"Because Sejanus," I answered, "regards not the purity of his soul, can surely be no good reason why I should bring a stain upon mine ; and if it be that Judea or Herod can be saved only by transgressing such rules, then may they sink into the ruin that awaits and becomes them."

At first Herod seemed, as I spoke, as if his passions were about to rise as when I was in Machærus ; but the expression of his countenance suddenly changed, and as I ended, he said laughing—

"By the soul of my father, but that is well and bravely said. Violate surely, young man, no rule of

truth and honour that is really such ; we would not have thee ; yet are there many by the world falsely esteemed such. Transgress these, and thou dost but the more sacredly observe the others ; this is the sin I would have thee commit—no other.”

We now returned to the palace.

That I may aid him in many affairs, in which I also now have an interest as well as every other Jew, Herod solicits me to remain for a season at Tiberias. This I gladly consent to do, that I may know more, through a nearer intercourse, of this strange man, and become acquainted also with this region of the country, especially with the shores of this beautiful lake. I shall hope also to wander as far as Cæsarea Philippi, the capital of Herod Philip.

LETTER XIX.

MARVEL not, my mother, that I thus consent to remain in Tiberias and in the service of Herod, while, as you well know, I incline so strongly towards Jesus. My accounts of Jesus have made not a deeper impression on your mind than I should have looked for ; and I am not surprised that in your last epistle you advise that I should for a time withdraw from Herod and Onias, and seek out the new prophet, and follow him for a season at least, that by my own observation and hearing I may make up my judgment concerning his real character and purposes. This assuredly I shall do, if no clear and decisive judgment is made and proclaimed by the people, or by those who have already made the observations which I am hoping to do. In the meantime I am becoming thoroughly acquainted with the affairs and plans of Herod, to which, after all, perhaps it is most probable I shall join myself. Besides this, also, so constantly do we receive intelligence of the movements of Jesus, and of the progress he makes, and the opi-

nions he declares, and the miracles he performs, that it sometimes seems to me that my means of a right judgment are as many and as trustworthy here as if I were among the multitudes who throng his steps. Many of his sayings are becoming common, and are treasured up in the memory, or by others written down, that they may be the better preserved, corrected, and enlarged by additions from future sources of information. The zeal in his behalf has been and is now almost universal; scarce any save the chief men among the sect of the Pharisees, and among the scribes and priests of Jerusalem, doubting that whatever may be his present appearance, conduct, and even language, he will in no long time break forth in all the glory of our expected prince. Yet there are those who hitherto have firmly believed, yet now are perplexed or doubtful—their perplexities and doubts springing, as far as I can at present discover, from the language which Jesus uses respecting the law, his disregard of the Sabbath, and the slight he casts upon those who are at the head both of religious and civil affairs, and to whom, were he really Messiah, he would, they think, certainly attach himself.

After many days devoted to the affairs of Herod, I at length obtained the freedom which I had long desired, to visit the villages scattered along this western shore of the lake, and especially Capernaum at its head, where Jesus has dwelt much of the time since his baptism, and where he has performed many of his miracles; and Bethsaida, about midway between Tiberias and Capernaum, whence, as I learn, Jesus hath drawn many of his followers.

Alone, on foot, with my staff in my hand, did I perform this journey, keeping for the most part on the very shores of the lake, turning aside into the villages only for purposes of shelter and rest by night.

Nowhere, as I believe, my mother, could the traveller enjoy more of what is both beautiful and grand in the works of God than on the shores of this little

inland sea. As I left Tiberias with my face to the north, I beheld the lake in its whole length, embedded as it were among lofty mountains, some approaching close to the very edge of the water, and terminating in abrupt precipices, others sloping gradually down with a plain between their roots and the lake, where roofs and towering pinnacles, glittering in the sun from out the midst of groves, betrayed the sites of fortress, village, and city. Rising high over all the nearer hills, and reigning as kings over dependent princes, shone the snowy tops of Lebanon, with a blaze of light too bright for the eye to look upon without pain. Genessareth lay among these hills, calm and unruffled, save by the occasional stirring of a summer breeze, as it slowly swept over it, or by the passing across of the fishermen's boats, as they went forth to cast their nets, or were returning laden with their rich spoils. Although the heat of the sun was great, yet by seeking the shelter of occasional groves, or the ledges of rock overhanging the very brink of the water, I kept on my way without interruption or discomfort—on the other hand enjoying in the highest degree the air, the prospect, the water, and above all, the freedom of motion of which this kind of travelling may boast over all others. Often, and with no other reason than because it then pleased me to do so, I lingered at the root of some heavy-leafed tree, where it flung its dark shadows over my path and on the edge of the water, or I lay along upon some smooth rock, and looking down into the clear depths of the lake, observed the sportings of the fish below, or watched the insects skimming waywardly the sleeping surface—no slow-paced mule, hard-going camel, or fleet Arabian would I have accepted to be deprived of such pleasures. Time I indeed wasted, or lost; but wisdom, as I think, I gained, and was satisfied with the exchange.

I soon reached Magdala, then passed Bethsaida, just visible on the west, standing far from the shores of

the lake, and before the sun had reached his highest point, drew nigh to Capernaum, at its extreme northern limit. When I was yet about two Roman miles from the town, still keeping to the very shores of the lake, but desiring, on account of the heat of the day and weariness, to reach it soon, that I might obtain rest, and the refreshment I greatly needed, I observed a boat, guided by two fishermen, making towards the shelter of some projecting rocks near which I was walking. While I stood watching their motions, they reached the shore, and leaping from their boat, drew it up upon the sand. Not doubting that from them I could obtain information concerning Capernaum, and a knowledge of the shortest path thereto, I approached them and made such inquiries as I wished. They replied with civility, informing me of the inn at which I should stop, and pointing out the shortest road. "But," said the elder of the two, "why, friend, shouldst thou not rest here with us while the sun beats down so hot, and partake with us of our noon-day meal? thou shalt be very welcome." I replied that nothing could be more agreeable, as I was both fatigued with the way, and weak through want of food. "Seat thyself then," said the other, "on yonder rock, within the shadows of the overhanging cliff, and thou shalt soon feast upon better fish than ever were drawn from the great sea, or any other."

So saying, he and his companion employed themselves in first covering over with fresh leaves the fish they had caught, and then in lighting a fire of wood, gathered from among the loose rocks, and preparing the frugal repast. The fish were soon broiling over the coals, and the fragrant smoke spreading around a foretaste of the more solid enjoyment to follow. The cooked food, with but brief delay, was then spread upon a smooth rock, which seemed as if it had long served for the same purpose; a loaf was added from the boat, and a cruse of water drawn from a spring

in the dark recesses of the cave or grotto, at the mouth of which we sat.

"Now," said the elder fisherman, "the dinner is ready, approach and eat; but first let us give thanks." So in few but reverent words, and with uplifted face, he acknowledged the providence of the ruler of the world, and the God of Israel.

"I perceive," said he, as we ate, "that you come by the way of Bethsaida and the southern part of the lake."

I said, "even from Tiberias."

"I thought so much," said the other; "for though you carry in your countenance something of the Jew, yet it shows as if you might have sprung of some of the mixed races whom Herod compelled within the walls of Tiberias to people his new city. But if you come from Tiberias, doubtless you can tell us news of what Herod is now doing; many reports are abroad, but we can only guess."

"I left him," I said, "within the city, quietly dwelling within the walls of his palace."

"Ah," said the other, "it is not by knowing where Herod now is, or about what he seems to be employed, that one can come at the truth. He is a man of many faces. What we hear is, yet no one knows anything with certainty, nor can trace the first springing of the rumour, that he is laying in secret plans for seizing the sovereignty of Judea—that many take him for the Christ who is to come, and hope through him to see the deliverance of the country."

I said that I knew well that such things were whispered, but that at Tiberias no open signs were apparent of such movements, nor did the people there, though so near the tetrarch, have any more certain knowledge of what had been spoken about than he himself. Still more, Pilate and the Roman powers seemed to suspect nothing. "How would the people of these parts," I asked, "affect him, should such rumours prove to be well founded?"

"He might find a few followers here," he answered,

“but not many, so long as John and Jesus are abroad among us. This youth, my partner, would join him, but so would not I.”

The young man, in reply to my question how he had come to a knowledge of Herod’s purposes, said that it had been through his messengers whom he employed, and who were scattered over Judea. “As I judge,” said he, “by means of such messengers he will spread a knowledge of his plans throughout the whole land, and will so work against both John and Jesus that they will ere long be driven from the land.”

“There’s a young hopeful for you,” said the elder fisherman; “so caught away is he with these notions that it is with much ado I secure now and then a day’s service at the nets or the line.”

Said the younger, “we must bear with one another; the times are rent with opinions, families divided among themselves, and the wisest perplexed.”

“God forbid it should be otherwise, Nathaniel,” said the elder; “yet much I fear me that ere long trouble will spring up in Israel, and the implements of the husbandman and the fisherman be beaten into swords and spears.”

I asked him why he thought so; I could see no immediate signs of war.

“Who doubts,” said he, “what is rumoured of Herod? Nought indeed can be affirmed with confidence; even Pilate, as thou hast said, seems not apprehensive; but though little is seen, none who know the tetrarch as well as his subjects in Galilee would take that as a proof that there is nothing to be seen. His presence and power are everywhere, and everywhere discernible by those who, as I do, mingle with many people of all classes and opinions; of late truly his activity has been less.”

I was surprised to find that so much was known, or so shrewdly guessed, of the plans and movements of Herod. But desirous to learn what I could from

this man, who, notwithstanding his occupation, seemed to be one of those destined by nature to be the instructors and guides of others, I asked him why he supposed the activity of Herod to be less now ?

"Without doubt," he replied, "because of the multitudes who throng after Jesus of Nazareth. Whatever are or have been the purposes of Herod, they must perforce now be laid aside, seeing that other sounds and louder have filled the ears of the people. Ah, sir, there were little chance for Herod would Jesus only declare himself; the people urge him to do so; but no such urgency has prevailed. While we cannot doubt that he is a prophet of God, seeing what his power is, yet will he give no sign, not to be mistaken, that he is the Christ."

"Why," I asked, "are you so sure that he is a prophet of God? Is there no room for deception?"

"It may suit the purpose of some," he answered, "to call him deceiver, and to give his works to Beelzebub; but no one, who has himself seen and heard, can in his heart doubt whence proceed his wisdom and his power."

"And have you," I asked, "seen and heard him?"

"Oh, sir, often. Since his appearance after the baptism in the Jordan he hath dwelt in our village; and who is there in Capernaum that knoweth him not, and hath not seen and heard him? He journeys often indeed into the parts round about, and has lately been at the feast in Jerusalem, and is now absent teaching in the towns near Samaria, but when these journeys are over, then he dwells in our town, and gladly do we hail his return."

"And doth he mingle freely with the people, so that they are permitted to know him?"

"Freely, most freely doth he mingle with all who, with honest purposes, seek to hear him; none are so poor, or so humble, but he is ready to do them good, by giving them the instruction they need, or by heal-

ing their diseases. From among such as these—such as myself—has he chosen his chief friends, those who are always with him. Our neighbours in the village, and our neighbours equally on the lake, Simon and his brother Andrew, fishermen as we are, not richer than we, nor higher in the world, has he drawn to himself; and those who once join him, it is certain will never leave him, with such veneration and love doth he inspire them. I had followed him myself, sir, but for my family, whom I could not leave. Never am I so happy as when I listen to his words in the synagogue on the Sabbath, or wherever it may be, in the street, or here on the shore of the lake, that he speaks to the people who hang upon his steps. Ah! how different his words from those of the rulers and Scribes! Never did man speak as he doth; it seems, indeed, as if we heard the voice of God rather than man! There seems a power of truth in him beyond and greater than that of our Scriptures. When he hath read from the prophets or from the law, and then, closing the volume, hath spoken himself, our hearts have burned within us, and we have said to ourselves, who can he be who is greater than Moses and the prophets?"

"Who, indeed!" I said rather to myself than to the fisherman; but he heard me, and asked eagerly, "Do you then believe in him?"

"And what," I asked, "do you mean by believing in him?"

"Surely," he answered, "believe him to be the Messiah, the prophet foretold as to appear in these latter days and redeem Israel from bondage. How else should I mean?"

I said I knew not enough yet to warrant me in believing that, and asked him if he himself believed.

He answered and said, "I do believe; yet I know that in doing so I believe rather because I will believe, than because I find a proof that satisfies me. Jesus hath not himself said that he is the Christ, so at least

say some, and if we believe him to be so, we believe in more than he himself affirms of himself; yet cannot I help but believe. Not doubting him to be a prophet of God, I cannot doubt he will be more than that."

"Yet how can you be so sure," I asked again, "that he is a prophet of God and no deceiver? There have been many deceivers who have misled the people: is it because of his miracles? But may not evil spirits show such power through a man? or is not magic equal to such things?"

"I believe him to be of God," answered the fisherman, "partly because of his miracles, and partly because of himself. What you say, sir, is very true, that miracles may be wrought by evil spirits, and some, perhaps, but not such as those of Jesus, by magic. Wherefore, when I resorted to Jesus, being at first drawn to him, I confess, by the noise made by his wonderful works, I gave not my faith until I had heard his doctrine, and found it to be such as was altogether worthy of God; and then observed his character and manner of life, and found that they also were altogether God-like. Of this agreement and fitness I think we are capable to judge; for is it reasonable to suppose that God hath given man power to know what food is nutritious to the body and wholesome, and hath not given power also to know what truth is nutritious to the soul, wholesome and divine, worthy of God to send and man to receive? So when I found that Jesus was so holy in himself, and so divine in the excellence of his doctrines, then I felt sure that his works could be done by no other spirit or power than a divine spirit and power, and I believed that he was a prophet. But what I have now said in many words was perhaps with me, as it is I doubt not with most, the work of, as it were, a moment. For so do the countenance, the manner, and the first words of Jesus fall upon and convince the soul, that a persuasion that he is honest and true comes as soon as sight and hearing, and the miracle, which we then

witness, we are sure is from God. We then receive him as a teacher come from God, and his words and doctrine, whatsoever they may be, as the words and doctrine of God."

"Your faith, then," I said, "rests on the works of Jesus?"

"Surely it doth," he answered; "his virtues and his doctrine, how excellent soever, could do no more than show that he was worthy to have come from God; not that he had come from him; for we know not how far the wisdom of a mere man may reach, nor how high his virtues may climb; but we do know that a man cannot do the works of Jesus except God be with him, or else the spirit of Beelzebub; and a good man worketh not by the help of an evil spirit."

"Yet," said I, "there are not a few now, as I hear, who say that the works of Jesus are done by an evil spirit, and not by the spirit of God."

"Among us in Capernaum there are but few such," replied the fisherman, "and they are of the leaders among the Pharisees, who themselves, when Jesus first appeared, were the first to believe, and to cry out Christ! Christ is come! and throng about him with their knee and mouth worship. Of the people there is not one who holdeth him not to be of God."

"But why did the Pharisees and Scribes forsake him then," I asked, "except they were persuaded he was a deceiver, and that they had reasons of weight to offer against him? Who in the villages of Judea are of a better power to judge in such things than they?"

"Many things," he replied, "in the doctrines and manners of Jesus helped to offend them and turn them against him. He would not flatter them, or bend to them, because of their office; but chose rather to consort with the good, however humble they might be, and even with Gentiles and sinners of every kind, so they came to him sincerely, desiring to listen to

him. Moreover he loosened, instead of drawing closer and tighter, the bonds of outward worship and rite; teaching that God judges by the state of the heart, and not by the number of a man's washings and sacrifices; and when he wished to show the people the difference between a painted outside and a pure heart, he would draw a picture of a Pharisee relying on the exactness of his observances, and of a publican, or a Gentile, doing good actions, and then trusting to the mercy of God, and would justify the latter rather than the former. Openly, too, has he rebuked these Pharisees for what all the world knows them to be chargeable with, their covetousness and unjust exactions; all which, and much more, that it would weary you, sir, to hear, enraged them, and the very man they were a little while ago exalting as the Son of God and King of Israel, they now upbraid as a child of the devil, and a minister of Satan—though Jesus stands among us the same as at first; so that the people value not their judgment at the weight of a fish's scale, but see plainly enough that it is all a piece of malice and revenge."

"It seems," said I, "to be indeed as you say."

"Be assured," said the other, "that it is so."

"You may safely believe," added the younger, "what Simeon has said; all in Capernaum would confirm it. I follow not Jesus as the Christ—nor do I think he will ever prove to be that person. He hath no fitness for such a trust, as I judge; but who shall doubt, who hath but once seen him, that he is a Son of God, and a prophet of Jehovah? He who should deny the works of Jesus, would deny the voice of God, though God spake in his very ear. Let Herod save Israel from Rome and deliver her, and then shall both John and Jesus, as Elijah and Elisha, teach and rebuke, and be to the people through their instructions as a savour of life to the dying."

"Herod, forsooth!" cried the elder with some indignation. "Who shall be found in Israel to put

their trust in him? I marvel at thee more and more, Simeon, that thou shouldst cleave to him—that thou shouldst hold to a man of violence and crime. Verily might Israel despair were her reliance on any of that wicked name. Would that Jesus, without delay, would declare himself, and this Herodian faction would vanish as the mists of the lake at the breaking forth of the sun. And did he but know what their designs are, and how busily and secretly they pursue them, sure I am it would move him to yield to those who urge him so to do.”

“He knows well of the Herodians,” said his companion, “and has warned the people against them and their leader ; so learned I but yesterday from one who was just from the feast ; but, if I may prophecy, Jesus will himself be sooner forsaken than Herod. I see not who bind themselves to Jesus but the poorer sort. Crowds of these are at his steps, and doubtless they truly honour him, but what staff are they to lean upon in a great enterprise such as that of the Messiah?”

“I trow,” replied the elder, “they will help Jesus as much and as securely on the way to greatness as Herod’s vices will him. What a besotted people are these of Judah and Jerusalem to deem that any good thing can prosper in the hands of a bad man ; and who worse than Antipas? Cunning and cruel, and who at this very time is about to make himself doubly an adulterer.”

I confess, my mother, I felt the blood to tingle in my veins and mount to my cheeks at the honest anger of this humble man, while I, looking only at ends, had too much blinded myself to the steps I was taking to reach them.

As the fisherman ended, and his partner was about to reply as it seemed to me with some passion, there came one running towards us along the shore in haste, as if to communicate somewhat of moment.

“The lad who runs,” said the fisherman, “has the

likeness of my son Judah; yet why should he make such speed in the hot sun; it may be that Jesus hath returned to Capernaum."

In the meantime the lad came up to us, as we still sat at our meal.

"And what is the news?" asked the father.

"The son of Phasaël," said the youth, as he could find his breath.

"Is he dead?" cried Nathaniel; "he lay this morning at the point of death."

"Not so," said the other, "but alive and well."

"Hath Jesus returned, then?"

"No; yet hath he healed him, himself being at Cana."

"Friend," said the fisherman, "go with us; let us behold this wonder."

Binding on my parcel, and seizing my staff, I hastened along with them. As we approached and entered the village, we saw, by the commotion and the running to and fro, that a strange thing had happened, in which the whole people were alike concerned. All were forsaking their employments and hurrying in one direction to have the testimony of their own eyes to the wonderful thing that had been reported. When we arrived at the dwelling of Phasaël—an officer of Herod's government—we could by no means approach it by reason of the throng, for it seemed that the whole town had run together into one place; but though we could not obtain near access to the house, yet could we easily behold the young man who had been cured, and who now came forth upon the house-top, and showed himself to the people; and we could hear the declaration of his parents, that at the same hour that Jesus had spoken the word in Cana, the young man's fever had left him. We were filled with awe, my mother, as you may believe, at the recital and the observation of such things. I felt as if then and there God was among us and around us in some extraordinary manifestations of his presence. In low

tones the people expressed their wonder one to another, and then in silence withdrew again from the place to their homes. The fishermen urging upon me, as the day was now drawn to its close, to tarry with them in their humble abode, I hesitated not, but accepting, with many thanks, their hospitality, accompanied them to their dwelling.

When the evening had come on, many of the neighbours gathered together with us, and the hours were passed in much further conversation and dispute concerning John, Herod, and Jesus.

At the early dawn I was awakened by the host, and after partaking with him, and his wife, and children, the morning repast, set forward on my way, returning not as I had come, but, at the instance of the fisherman, by the way of villages lying removed from the lake, among which were Cana and Nazareth. "For thy pleasure merely," said he, "I could wish thee to keep ever on the shores of Genessareth, where thine eye can dwell upon finer things than can be found elsewhere in Judea, and where thou canst both behold the drawing in of the fishermen's nets, with the passage of their boats along the lake, and also feast upon the rich dainties they fetch up from the lower waters. Whose life shall compare with a fisherman's on the Lake of Galilee? But because I would have thee see Jesus and hear him, for thine own sake and Judea's, I commend to thee this other road; and it will be strange if either at Nazareth or Cana thou do not find him, or else at some point on the highway. Take with thee, friend, the counsel of one who has seen many years, and forsake the society and the cause of Herod. He cannot aid the cause of God in one way who hinders it in another."

I replied to the fisherman, that I would not forget his counsel, though I could not promise to follow it, and bidding him farewell, addressed myself to the pleasures of the road. These I found to be well worth the seeking. The morning air was cool and invigo-

rating, and the earth in all directions burdened with a vegetation uninjured by droughts, which in this climate often destroy the hopes of the husbandman, and promising the richest returns to the granary. Indeed the earlier grains are already ripe, and the fields yielding before the sickle of the reaper. Frequent villages and scattered dwellings separated by groves, or by an occasional barren track of rock and sand, afforded every variety of object which the mind could desire; and much additional information of every sort did I gather from those whom I overtook on the way, and walked and conversed with, or from those by whom I was entertained in the villages. The highways were filled by persons who, after resorting to Jesus during the days that he remained in Cana and the towns round about, were, now that he had departed for another region, returning to their homes.

From conversations with many of these, I learned that Jesus, having left Cana, had gone towards the sea-coast; but that while in this neighbourhood he had performed many miracles, by which the people had been astonished, and had been brought to believe in him, notwithstanding so many things make against him: they were persuaded he would yet show himself to be the Christ. They were simple country people with whom I for the most part talked, and they could give no better or other reason for the faith they were disposed to rest in him, than that they thought him a good man, who would not deceive those who came to him, and it would be a great deception if he raised in them a belief that he was the Christ, and suffered it to take root in them, when he was not that great prophet. They had heard many things indeed from him, which they could not understand, and many things which, if they heard them aright, made it indeed not easy to see how he should be the Christ who was to come into the world, seeing they were in opposition to the law, and placed the Romans and all others as high in the favour of God as the Jew;

moreover, he seemed not in any respect to justify such acts as those by which the kingdom of God and of Israel must be established, if it ever be established. Yet, whenever he had spoken of righteousness, and what pertains to a man's life and his soul, they had comprehended him, and acknowledged a wisdom surpassing that of man, and belonging only to one who, like Aaron, was the mouthpiece of God ; so that they still believed. Among other questions which I put to them, I asked if he had warned the people against Herod. They said that he had not failed to do so ; he seemed to know well what every body guesses, that Herod is working in secret throughout Israel, although it be so that no one can point to any open act of his, and that Herod himself seems to be employed in quite other affairs, with getting him a new wife, and preparing to make war with the king of Arabia. Jesus spoke as if these were not his real designs ; but there were others which he was aiming to carry on—to favour which he was covertly using every means to gain the hearts of the people. When I further asked what they themselves supposed such designs to be, they hesitated not, but believed that he was aiming at the throne of Israel. And they could not doubt that Jesus entertained the same opinion, and that it was to put the nation on its guard against him that he had spoken.

These, and other things which I learned on the way of such as I fell in with, greatly increased my desire to see Jesus, and my sorrow that he had turned from Cana towards the sea-coast, instead of the east and the Jordan, as I had hoped he would do. I, however, kept on my way in the direction I had first marked out, as I could not prolong my absence without failing in my promises to Herod.

As the day declined, I drew near to Nazareth, which, lying to the south of high hills, was not visible from the quarter in which I approached it, until winding about among many valleys and narrow passes, and

crossing a precipitous ridge, I at length suddenly came upon it, situated nearly at the foot of a hill, or rather where its last slope falls by sharp pitches into the plain, but having a mountainous region shutting it in on every side, and lofty abrupt preeipices rising directly in its rear. The scene presented to the eye objects well caleulated to delight and impress the mind of one who should dwell among them, no part of it being tame and flat, but either grand through the wildness of many of the hills, where no vegetation could fix a root by reason of the soil, rocky and worn away by descending torrents, or else beautiful on aecount of the diligent eultivation of the husbandman, or the groves of every variety of tree and shrub which covered the plain, and flourished, as it seemed, with redoubled luxuriance, as a return for the riches of which the annual rains had robbed the surrounding heights and spread around their roots.

The sun was not far above the hills on the western side of this happy valley, shedding his last rays on tower and village and bleak hill top as I entered, weary with the hot and dusty way, the outskirts of the town. The houses of the rural population grew more frequent as I drew near, each with its cultivated ground near it, a part always covered with the fig, the olive, and the date. At the doors, or seated beneath the surrounding trees, were the inhabitants, engaged in the various arts of domestic life, or else, their labour for the day being done, reposing in the shade, or sporting with children, who here, as everywhere, seemed freely given of nature as man's best solace and most effectual teachers. One of these humble dwellings especially drew my attention from the greater pleasantness of its situation, though otherwise it differed little from those that were in its neighbourhood. An olive orehard covered it on one side, fig-trees stood thickly around, and the form of the cottage was almost conecealed by vines which had grown over it, burying it in a profusion of leaf and

flower. But what chiefly fastened my gaze, and made me here pause that I might put the inquiries necessary to my further progress, was the form and countenance of one who seemed the mother of the family, and who sat at the distaff in the entrance of the dwelling, younger members of the household and children sitting or playing around; for the face was one which, as it was turned upon me on my approach, at once inspired confidence as well as raised admiration. It was not a matter of choice whether I should accost her, since before I had made any determination concerning what I should do, I found myself drawn away from the path I had been pursuing, and standing before her: then it was only with hesitating utterance that I asked concerning the village, the distance thereto, and made such other inquiries as were needful. She had risen as I spoke, moving from where she had sat as if to make way for my entrance within the house. Hardly waiting for me to finish my inquiries, she said, "You are already weary with the dust and travel of the road, and it is yet many a rood to the heart of the town, enter then, and here rest and be refreshed: when thou hast washed and eaten, then thou shalt go on or tarry as thou wilt."

With many thanks I accepted these hospitable offers. My sandals were soon removed, the vessels for washing made ready, loose and flowing garments, adapted to this hot region, woven of the lightest threads, yet of a plain and homely material, were brought, and in no long time I was again vigorous, it seemed to me, as at early dawn.

As the table was now spread by youthful hands, and covered with the food, easily prepared, of these regions, the mother said, "Our fathers, sir, when they dwelt in tents, never shut the door against the stranger; the hot cake and the seethed kid ever smoked upon their board: it is little for us to do to imitate them who dwell in fixed habitations."

"Yet it were not reason," I answered, "that from

their descendants of this age should be exacted the hospitality which distinguished them, seeing that, in their time, the people were few in number, and a stranger or foreign trafficker was rarely seen, and when seen, he was indeed very heartily welcome, inasmuch as he brought news of foreign parts, of which knowledge could be had in no other way. As much was received as given."

"So saying, sir, you take away from our fathers the virtue of their action."

"Not so," I answered. "It was not the less virtuous that it was sometimes and by accident rewarded, else the care of a mother, who sees the fruit of her toil in the virtues of her child, would lose its merit. Many are our acts which carry their reward along with them, and we must forbear the acts or consent to do them with the knowledge that a reward will follow. But surely this is different from the case of the Pharisee, who prays that he may be seen, or gives alms when he would withhold them but for some prospect of praise or advantage."

"You speak the truth," replied the woman ; "were it not so, our hope of heaven would turn all our goodness into sin, or make it nothing worth ; but to hope for heaven, we cannot help if we would. I marvel why my husband and sons come not : it is the hour of supper ; but their tarrying shall bring no delay to thee ; draw near and eat."

But while she yet spoke, her husband entered, accompanied by his sons, as if returning from the labours of the day ; and when they had first washed, placed themselves also at the board, the daughters serving. I was bid heartily welcome to their humble roof by the father and his sons, as I had been before by the mother and her daughters, and I had passed but a little while conversing of such things as offered, ere I felt, from the simple kindness that marked all their words and demeanour, that I was among such as both feared God and loved their neighbour. As soon as it

was learned that I had come from the lake and through Cana, the mother asked if I had seen Jesus in Cana, or in either of the villages on the road.

I answered that I had not, although it was in the hope to find him that I had departed from Genessareth in my return to Tiberias.

"Are you then," she asked again with earnestness, "one of his followers ; and do you believe in him ?"

I said that I was by no means a follower or believer, although on the way I had fallen in with many such.

"I had hoped," she replied, "that you believed, for it seems as if your judgment would be honest." But, after a moment's pause, she added, "You have said that you are from Jordan and the neighbourhood of Beth-Harem, what think they in those regions ?"

I said that there, as all along on the borders of the lake, the greater part of the people believed in him, or stood waiting and ready to believe, as soon as some sign more distinct and plain should be given them that he is indeed the person for whom they look. But I could not deny that for the reason that such signs had been delayed, many were losing their trust in him, giving in to the opinions of the leaders among the Pharisees, who were not only opposed to him, but exceedingly bitter.

"I do not see," replied the mother, "why they should be bitter against him, or seek his harm : he himself surely does no one harm, but is gentle towards all—save towards those whom he well knows to be hypocrites—and is full of benevolent deeds. I never will doubt that God is with him."

"It certainly," I here said, "will make against his success with the people, if it be true, as has been lately rumoured, that you of Nazareth do not believe in him ; and, more than that, that you have even attempted his destruction."

"It ought not," said the mother quickly, "it ought not to make against him any more than it ever should against a good man, that the wicked rail ; such railing

is to his honour ; it is, on the part of the Nazarenes, nought but envy."

"But," I rejoined, "the people of distant places say, if they of Nazareth, who have known him from his youth up, reject him, how can any believe?"

"And surely," said one of the sons, "they say it with reason."

"I cannot think so, Judas," rejoined his mother. "The people of Nazareth hold it ill that one of themselves, no better and no richer they say than themselves, should set himself up as a teacher: they will not listen to such an one. Who were they who set upon him in the synagogue, and would willingly, in their rage, have cast him from off the precipice, but persons whom we well know, and well know to have been moved by no better spirit than I have named? The rumour was a true one which you heard, sir, but it would not sway your mind against Jesus did you know better the heart of these men of Nazareth. Surely, methinks, to deserve their hatred is to be the more secure of the favour of God."

"But," said I, "it is even reported, and I myself heard it at Capernaum, that the family of Jesus, his parents and brethren, believe not in him, but are as the other inhabitants of the place, which I confess filled me with astonishment, and caused me to think otherwise than I had been inclined to do of those who in other parts of the country turn away from him."

"Do you not know then," said the father of the family, "that we are the parents of Jesus, and these his brethren and sisters?"

"Truly, I knew it not," I replied; "but I am rejoiced that a happy chance has thrown me among those whom it was my chief purpose in journeying through Nazareth to seek out. I bless God, who has guided me to your roof, for I doubt not it is highly favoured of him. I am not, as I have declared already, a believer in your son, unless he may be called a believer who, though he has not seen, nevertheless

believes in his honesty and truth that he is all that thus far he has claimed to be. Everything that I have heard, from the very first, has gone to persuade me that God is with him, and that it is with his spirit and power that he is inspired."

"And deeper down in your heart would your faith be," said the mother of Jesus, "if you yourself knew him of whom we speak."

"Nevertheless," said I, "I perceive from what you have already said that the rumour of which I have spoken is true, that not only do the inhabitants of Nazareth reject Jesus, but that some of his own family reject, or at least doubt, concerning him: this, I confess, amazes me."

"We would all," said the young man who had spoken before, "willingly believe if we could. Yet do not imagine that the feelings of the people of Nazareth, which my mother has truly, as I believe, ascribed to them, are wholly ours. It is with them envy and indignation that a mere mechanic, and the son of one, should profess a wisdom beyond that of the Scribes, and assert claims so high and an authority above that of the Pharisees, the rulers, and the council. He has been so long their townsman and fellow-labourer that they cannot at once receive him as a teacher and a ruler."

"I can understand the feeling," I said.

"Jesus himself," continued Judas, "gave it the right interpretation, when, as he left the synagogue, he said, a prophet is honoured everywhere else rather than in his own town and among his own family and friends."

"That," said I, "I doubt not is according to our nature."

"But," replied the brother, "believe me when I affirm that it is not this sentiment alone nor chiefly that governs his parents or brethren."

I said quickly, "I was sure he spoke the truth. In your very faces," I added, "I behold the signs which make such feelings impossible to you."

"The Lord reward you," said the mother.

"Yes," resumed the brother, "the Lord bless you for your good opinion. We have by many been reviled, but we can think no otherwise than our own minds will allow. We should not be blamed for opinions which are forced upon us against our will and our old affections."

"Why, then," I said, "if it be not to ask too much, do you hesitate to give a full faith to Jesus? I would fain know whether the same things weigh with you as with others in other parts of Judea."

"We have not doubted hitherto," resumed the brother, "that Jesus is inspired of God. We do not, as others, wickedly give the wonders he performs to spirits of the dead, or to Beelzebub, of whom and whose power we believe nothing, nor in truth do many of those who make such assertions. The whole manner of his life, as well as the strange events at his birth, convince us that he is highly favoured of God, and by him reserved to some mighty work."

"What is reported then of his birth, and we have all heard, may be received as true?" I said, turning as I spoke towards the mother of Jesus.

Her countenance, radiant with faith and love, beaming with all the marks of conscious truth, gave silent answer to what I had asked. Never had I beheld in mortal woman what for more than mortal beauty and a certain divine charm seemed so like a blessed angel of God. The silence of all, as their eyes, like mine, fastened upon her, also gave answer to my inquiry.

After a brief pause, Judas continued: "What it is that of late has perplexed us, and caused us against our nature and our desires to doubt, has been the strangeness of the doctrines which Jesus has preached, and the strangeness of his conduct. In good truth, he is no longer a Jew—he is rather anything else—and can we hold him longer with an unwavering persuasion to be a prophet of God to his people who

sets aside the law God himself gave to that people, to be an everlasting covenant between him and them?"

"Yet have I been told," I said, "that he attendeth both upon the services of the synagogue and at the feasts in Jerusalem; and that he of late went up to the Passover and the Pentecost."

"You say true," replied Judas, "it is so as you have heard; but, nevertheless, that is true also which I have affirmed. He preaches, indeed, in the synagogue. But what preaches he? The law?—the prophets?—their excellence and everlasting dominion?—the claims of Israel to the favour of God before all other? Not so: but in the face of all this, his own authority he sets up against that of Moses—the prophets shall pass away or be changed, the kingdom of God shall be thrown open to Gentile as well as Jew! Is it to be supposed that a man from God would come and overthrow the word and the work of him who sent him? What can we say?—what can we do? It was hearing such things, as well as envy, that filled the men of Nazareth with rage, and drove them mad against him."

"What make you, then," I asked, "of the miracles of Jesus? They surely show him to be sent of God."

"This also perplexes us," resumed the brother. "He does the works of God, while he assails to overthrow it—the truth of God. How, we ask, can these things be? As we judge, our allegiance to Moses and to God forbid us to believe."

"Not quite so," interrupted the father with a voice of mild rebuke; "Judas is carried away by his zeal. We refuse not to believe; we only say that we now waver and are perplexed. We cannot reconcile the one with the other; the miracles that he doth and the doctrine that he preaches, yet we trust to be able to do so."

"But," said I, "do not the miracles that he does, supposing his power to be that of God, and not of a devil——"

"Oh, we doubt not that his power is of God," they all cried, interrupting me ; "so holy and just a person, whom all love and honour who know him, could receive nothing from and hold no communion with a wicked spirit."

"Then," I continued, "do not his miracles, which he works by God's power, show that his doctrine must be approved of God? Would not such power be withdrawn if it were made to substantiate aught at variance with his will—howsoever it may differ from truths previously delivered?"

"Surely," said the mother, "the young man reasons aright. How shall he preach contrary to the truth of God who hath power to do the works of God? It may be that by the mouth of Jesus he would declare some new truth, not such as shall be in violation of the law of Moses, but in addition to it; and truly, as I think, there is much that passes among us as the law given of God, which were perhaps better termed the false conclusions of vain and mistaken men."

"Ah, my mother," said Judas, "thou art carried away by thy love to say things contrary to the truth. Here now wouldst thou cause the law, even the law of God, to veil itself before the wisdom of thy son Jesus! I should fear to do that. Mayhap thou dost still hold him to be even the Christ?"

"Nay, nay, Judas," exclaimed his sisters, "say not so."

"Forbid him not," said the mother, "I do believe him to be the Christ. Yet ask me not for a reason for this faith; for, alas! I cannot give it. Nay, more than that, Judas, many things that he hath said and done I comprehend not. I can by no means resolve. Yet cannot I help but believe; the truest faith is, methinks, of the heart; but it is as much without reason as a mother's love of her child."

"And it may be, my mother," replied Judas, "that your faith shall in the end, without its reasons, prove truer than ours, with so many which we judge so

strong; and if it would bring a greater happiness to the mother to behold her son on Messiah's throne, may her happiness be made complete, if it be the will of God. But doubtless to such as judge on the grounds which the prophets furnish, no one thing appears so difficult to believe as that; for, save the power to do wonderful works, a power which has been bestowed upon many, there seems no correspondence whatsoever between him and the Christ. What do we, what do the people of Israel look for in the Christ? Verily it is one and the same thing in every mind—a redeemer and a deliverer from our bondage; who shall then reign our king and prophet over a kingdom without limits as without end. This is what the prophets have taught, and this is what the people believe and wait for with impatience. Is Jesus such an one? Are there in him signs that mark the conqueror and king? Is there in him aught that savours of Judas Maccabeus, or even of Judas of Galilee? Nay, can one so much as think of Jesus doing the deeds that must be done when Israel shall arise and enter into her glory? Has he not, indeed, when teaching the people, declared things which, if they be rightly understood, make it but a sin and an offence to seek dominion, and to aspire after honour and seats of pride and power. He commends the humble, the meek, the peaceful, and such as are content to submit and serve; taking heed only to their souls to keep them holy in the sight of God, rebuking the contentious and ambitious, the lovers of place and authority. How shall such an one be the Christ of Israel? Such precepts consist not with the character and deeds of the son of David. They agree well with the character of Jesus, and no other precepts should I ever expect to hear from his lips, and so should we all say.”

“Yes, surely we should say it,” fell from all.

“But,” continued Judas, “they agree not, as I have said, with the office and work of the son of David.”

As Judas ended, the others were silent—the mother

of Jesus buried, as it seemed, in many thoughts, of which no others might be sharers. Presently as the supper was ended, we went out and sat beneath the vines that hung over the dwelling and stretched also from tree to tree; the warm air and the bright heavens, thick set with the stars of evening, inviting us where such pleasures could be enjoyed in addition to those of friendly discourse. Here, then, when we were seated, the father and his sons with me, I sought to renew the conversation that had been broken off, being desirous to learn what I could from those who must possess in many things a more exact knowledge than could be found elsewhere, and who appeared not less disposed to impart what they knew or thought than I was to listen to their words.

But as I had already gathered so much from them concerning themselves and their relations to Jesus, I began our conversation by informing them of my own life and opinions, not withholding from them my conviction of what I believed was Herod's part in the present affairs of Judea, though by no means communicating other things respecting him and myself, which I was bound not to reveal. What I had said concerning Herod was already well known to them, as being generally known or suspected throughout the land, yet nothing coming abroad, however, with such distinctness as to give occasion of alarm to Pilate. With Tiberius, Herod remains in highest favour, as fast a friend to Rome as he has ever been to Roman customs. To his hostility to John and Jesus he takes care to give the colour of friendship and zeal for Rome, and the security of his possessions; so that of designs inimical on his own part they think not.

When I had ended, Judas said, "Herod is the bitterest foe of Jesus; not openly so, but secretly, through those whom he employs to beset his steps, and inflame against him the Pharisees and the people. While he supposed Jesus to make no pretensions, and lay no claim to the office and title of Messiah, he did little

against him; but since it is affirmed that Jesus has declared, not only as at first, that the kingdom is at hand, but that it has come, and that he is the expected prince, and that by his disciples it is believed that he is so, Herod is become more active, and, as we just learn, is resolved upon his destruction. There are those in Nazareth and in Jerusalem who, together with a priest in Beth-Harem, are in league with each other to seek occasions when the passions of the people may be roused against him, and a tumult raised, in the confusion of which it will be easy, they suppose, to effect their purpose."

In what Judas said I was astonished at two things—that Herod was actively employing his agents in opposition to Jesus, and that Jesus was now known to have declared himself the Messiah. As to the first, Herod at Tiberias had said that he did not hold it needful to do aught against Jesus, seeing that the anger of the Pharisees, whom he rebuked with such severity, would do for him all he should desire to be done; he must therefore have deceived me, or else have suddenly changed his purposes. I was also surprised to learn that Jesus had, with such explicitness, avowed himself the Messiah; that it had come to be known as a truth to be relied upon; for hitherto, although the people were clear in their belief that he would prove to be that person, and would so declare himself, yet from him they had been able to obtain only obscure and doubtful hints. The fact that he had now confessed himself the Christ, it seemed to me, would decide his fate one way or another in a short time.

"That has now happened," I said to Judas, "which but a little while ago at supper I was about to suppose the occurrence of, and ask your opinion concerning it. Jesus acknowledges himself the Messiah, but with this declaration is there any change in his doctrine or his appearance?"

"There is not," said Judas.

"And what then," I asked, "will be the effect of such declaration?"

"It is not difficult," replied the other, "to foresee. It will cause him to be rejected and denied by all Israel as one man! How, by possibility, can it be otherwise? Hitherto, while himself has made no such declaration, but it has only been made for him, the reason urged against him has been that he agrees not in his character and purposes with the prophets; but all have deemed, who have persisted to have faith in him, that as soon as he should assume the name, then would he burst forth in the splendour becoming the son of David and the king of Israel. The miracles he has done, and the excellence of his character and his teaching, have retained the multitude in their faith or hope that he would not disappoint them in the end. And sure they were, that when the great and blessed day should arrive, that he should proclaim his approaching honours, the divine powers he is intrusted with would be put forth in surrounding himself and his followers with all the pomp and glory of a kingdom whose founder and father is God."

"Yet," said I, "no such things have happened."

"They have not: he continues as he was. He still wanders about the land as if without home or friends, meanly apparelled, wearied with the way, and exhausted through want of food and drink, and as night approaches, sleeping oftentimes beneath the open sky, or throwing himself upon the charities of those who are poor as he; consorting, moreover, by night and by day, with those whom the chiefs of the land look upon as little better than the offscouring of the earth, though, indeed, their chief fault is, that like us and like Jesus they are poor and of no repute, or like us and all, save Jesus himself, sinners."

"And you would say," I exclaimed, "shall Israel receive such a one as her king?"

"That is what I would say," he answered. "It can never be. Notwithstanding he may still perform his wonders, and notwithstanding he may remain as he

has ever been, spotless in innocence as the lamb or the dove, and yet wise as the serpent, astonishing us and the multitudes by a wisdom such as we find not even in the prophets—notwithstanding this, and much more than this, will the people reject him; and so ought they to do.”

“And you?” I said.

“Alas,” interposed the father, “what can we do? We would fain believe, but how can we do so if we would remain Jews? In his goodness we believe, for never was there a holier on earth; in his wisdom we believe, for verily the wisdom of the Most High seems to be his; in his powers we believe, as powers which God has bestowed; in his mission from God we believe, for no one could do what he doth, and teach as he doth, except God were with him. And more we would believe if we could, but we see not how it can be. While he claimed but to be a prophet, we could admit his claims; but now that he claims to be the Christ and king of Israel, we admit them not; and how were it possible to do so? We are now perplexed and divided.”

“Our mother,” said Judas, “has not yet learned what I have now said, that Jesus is known to have claimed for himself the kingdom. Great will be her grief and amazement; for with unfailing faith has she waited for the time when he should declare himself, and in the same hour shine forth in the glory that would then become him, and seal him the Anointed.”

“Her faith,” I said, “will not yield, I am sure. Her love is so strong it will teach her to confide rather in him than in her own capacity to judge in what relates to the dispensations of God.”

“That is true,” said Judas. “And it will be the same affection, with reverence of his character and virtues, that will cause the common people to adhere to his cause after, in every reasonable view, all hope is extinct. His gentleness towards all, his compassion for the suffering, together with his power to relieve

those whom he pities, his love even for the sinner, for whom he ever seems to feel more than for the most righteous, seeking to turn him from his errors ; the wisdom of his discourse, which he adapts by parables and feigned events to the simplest understanding ; above all, the plain intelligible doctrines he propounds, so contrary to the dark sayings of the Scribes—all these things bind the people to him, so that, in spite of long delay and many adverse signs, in spite of much they may not be able to explain, or reconcile in his sayings and his appearance with his claims, they will cleave to him, and throng his steps : they love, and they will believe. Whatsoever may chance, there will be some who will never forsake him. Others will think and compare more, and will at least wait before they give their faith, and before they resist and oppose. As for the rulers and the leaders among the Pharisees, they will now have all the pretext they can desire to assail him : they will not be content, like many, to sit still and suffer time to unfold what it may, which is our part ; they will seek to visit upon him the penalties of what they will call his presumption and blasphemy."

"I can easily understand that it will be as you have said with the people, for I am sure it would be so with myself could I follow him as they are doing. Love would take place of reason, and I should have no longer power to discern between truth and error, so that it must doubtless be safer for the cause of truth that I, and others indeed, remain aloof where the eye shall keep its uncorrupted sight, undazzled by an object too glorious for it to behold, save from a distant point. Yet has it long been my warm desire to seek Jesus and follow him, if not as a disciple, as one who would learn of any teacher the truth concerning God and virtue, life and death ; and it is of these, as I hear, that he chiefly discourses."

"It is as you have been told," replied Judas ; "to hear his teaching it would not be supposed that

thoughts of dominion and a kingdom had ever entered his mind. Of such things, things which the multitudes who throng him never forget or lose from their thoughts, he seems not so much as to dream. Can he then be the Christ? Nay, not only of such things does he never appear to think or speak, but such things as are most opposite doth he take most pains to commend, but which can have but little attraction to the kind of people who most follow him, and who are hoping (against hope) that one day, sooner or later, they shall reap a reward for their fidelity in the new kingdom. Sure I am he will have no such reward to bestow, even upon those whom he has chosen as his nearest friends, and to whom he commits all his thoughts, much less upon others."

"What then," I asked, "think you it is in his purpose to bring to pass if he aim not at any of the ends we believe to be those of the Christ?"

"Truly, I cannot tell," answered Judas. "He speaks indeed of establishing a kingdom, but he seems not to mean any such kingdom as we see at present in the world, but if any, one of truth and holiness, where all should obey the law, and he should reign over them in some new manner. No one, however, pretends to understand some of the things he sets forth, however simple others may be; that is admitted even by his disciples. That he hath, as I have said, declared that he is the Messiah, in plain and clear terms, I do not believe, but only that it has been gathered from phrases which he hath employed. All, sir, it can with certainty be affirmed of the objects which Jesus has before him, is, that he aims to increase the happiness of the people by teaching them the fear of God, by showing them, by the manner in which he himself lives, how they ought to live, by using the wonderful power which God has intrusted to him for their benefit, and by exposing the hypocrisies of the Pharisees, and their perversions of the law, their false maxims, and formal and heartless worship."

"These are objects," I said, "well worth living for, and if need be, dying for; and though Jesus should not be the Christ, yet must he be esteemed one of the chief of the prophets of God."

"And a pity it is," added a younger brother, "that Jesus will not be content with this nor aim at more. Then doubtless would he carry with him the hearts of the greater and better part of the people, and make many useful changes in the doctrine and ceremonies of our worship, which we all know have been greatly corrupted by the traditions descended from former times. He would, no doubt, still enrage the Pharisees and the Jerusalem priests, but the rest would uphold him."

"I know not that," replied Judas; "the people are well satisfied with the law as it is and has descended to us from our fathers. It may not be in all things as it was in the time of Moses—somewhat may have been added, and somewhat may have been altered; but it is what we have all grown up under and prospered by, and why should it be changed?"

"We have truly grown up under it," said the other; "but we seem not so plainly to have prospered, unless slavery and sin may be called prosperity. Who knows not the wickedness of the priests and rulers, and their abuses of the poor by their perversions of the law, whereby they enrich themselves and grind the widow and the orphan to the dust. Truly did I rejoice when Jesus cleared the temple at the Passover of another set of rogues, whose life it is to sit and suck the blood of the poor. God prosper him while he strikes at such; and while he does no more, and lays claim to no more, God will prosper him. That he is the Christ I do not believe, nor, as I judge, ever shall."

"All doctrine and all law," replied Judas, "will be ever abused and perverted more or less; in the case of some ignorantly, and of some with wicked intent, but from such evil we should not be rescued by over-

throwing the law itself. I would that Jesus should neither overthrow the law, nor, as he doth, diminish its authority, but rather content himself with changing the manners and lives of the people, and teaching them the fear of God."

Saith the father, "My children, let us not question the ways of one whom surely, without shame, we may hold as wiser than ourselves, since we doubt not that God in very deed speaks through him. We may wholly approve, moreover, of the conduct of which we see the whole and comprehend it, while, when but a little is seen, we may judge it evil. With Jesus it is, as with the providence of God: we confide in Jehovah that all shall be well, though now and here in our human darkness and ignorance we can penetrate his ways hardly more than the blind. Let us put our trust also in Jesus, nor judge until we are able to see whither all is tending, and what its purpose and issue are. The Pharisees are enraged that he teaches in some things contrary to their interpretations of the law, but others think that the new sayings of Jesus are in a nearer accordance with the true sense of Moses and the prophets. Some, as here in Nazareth, are offended and ready to destroy him in that he, who is but the son of a carpenter, should pretend to teach as a prophet—among whom we also have been numbered—nor will they, for this reason, believe in the reality of works which their own eyes behold, but deny that they are done at all, or give them to magic or to devils. Where so many differ, how shall we at once discern the truth? Let us be patient and wait."

"It were well," I said, "if all could be persuaded to obey the advice you have given; but now that Jesus has suffered it to be known that he holds himself not only as an inspired teacher, but the Messiah of our nation, no human counsel and no mortal arm can stay the rage that will fill many souls. If the men of Nazareth were inflamed to so high a pitch of

rage, that he whom they knew to be but as one of themselves should teach them, how much rather will multitudes of the leaders of the people, hungering and thirsting for the honey and manna, the wine and milk of the new kingdom of God, be filled with envy and rage when they hear that Jesus declares himself the head of that kingdom, and yet is to bestow upon them nought but the blessings of righteousness, peace, and hope in God—no other honours, no other riches.”

The hour of repose having insensibly drawn on as we said these things, we then separated, and were soon drowned in sleep.

When the morning was come, and I had worshipped with this household and eaten, and had taken leave of Joseph and his sons, who went early to begin the labours of the day, I sought Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the garden, where she sat alone.

“Young man,” said she, “may the Lord bless thee and go with thee. Thou dost almost believe in Jesus seek him if thou canst, sit with him, and open thine ears with a mind willing to be convinced, and thou shalt wholly believe. Yet I blame not my sons that they withhold their faith as thou hast seen; too near are they to see aright; but, as I believe, their hearts are true, and they will not willingly do their brother a wrong.”

“That,” said I, “is the chief thing: it is much less surely that they should think with thee than that they should act right. They are bound to do justly; but they must think as they can.”

“So it is,” rejoined the mother; “I only could desire that they followed him; then, as I think, would they trust him more, and would be with him to aid in times of danger, and the older to counsel him. For though it be that the wisdom of God dwells in him, yet doth he needlessly, as I judge, run into dangers, and stir up against him the angry passions of the rulers and Scribes. Moreover, through the zeal which consumes him, and the importunity of the

multitudes who throng him with their sick folks to be healed, and whom he can never send away till he hath satisfied them, have we deemed him as one beside himself, and have sought to draw him away, lest he should die; but he heeds us not. If thou shouldst follow him, and join his disciples, thou wilt not—thou wilt not forsake him if thou shouldst see danger or evil to threaten?”

“Assuredly,” I answered, “I will stand ready at all times to help and defend, for I believe him holy, and a messenger of God, even as do his brethren; but I do not see how it were possible I should be a follower of him, as I am already bound to Herod.”

Mary started as I said those words, and exclaimed, “Ah, art thou then of Herod? It is said that that wicked man pursues even the life of Jesus as of John also. What has he done of injury to thy master? Alas! it is not in his heart to harm the least or the worst thing in nature. What can set thee against him?”

“Fear nothing from me,” I answered, “nor yet from Herod, if any power of mine may avail to turn aside the evil he may intend. Though I believe not in Jesus as the Christ of God, I believe he is of God, and full of goodness, as thou and thy sons have said, and never shall he suffer harm if arm of mine can hinder.”

Said the mother, “I doubt thee not, I doubt thee not. Ah! why do I seem to doubt the providence and the arm of God—why cleave to human aid? Had I any of the faith of our father Abraham I should not be thus afraid and leaning on broken reeds; why should I fear? Why does my mother’s heart tremble when I know that God reigneth? Will not he, who gave me my son, and hath appointed him to this high destiny, appear for and protect him by his own stretched out arm? Shall he leave half finished the work he hath begun? Shall it be in the power of man to defeat the hopes of Israel? Shall Herod even or Pilate lay their hand upon the Lord’s Anointed to

do him harm, or the priests and the Scribes in their envy? Shall not he, to whom the Lord hath thus revealed himself, though the whole land rose up against him, and Babylon herself were moved to destroy him; laugh them to scorn, and over their ruin enter into his glory? I doubt it not. God, who has poured out of his spirit in so full measure upon my son Jesus, will not leave nor forsake him, but will exalt him to the throne of his fathers, and all Israel shall confess him king."

As the mother of Jesus said these words, all her confidence and faith appeared to return; she once more forgot the mother's fond anxiety in her sense of his union with God, and in her faith that God, who had so mysteriously endowed him, would watch over him and preserve him for the ends to which he had destined him. How shall I describe the divine countenance of this fortunate mother, as she cast herself in so absolute a spirit of faith on the providence of God? I cannot. When I once more see thee, my mother, I can tell more than my pen can say.

With the affection of a mother for a child, she then gave me her blessing: "Go thy way, young man, and the blessing of Jehovah be upon thee. If it please the Lord to turn thy heart towards his Son Jesus, come hither again, and this roof shall again receive thee, and when all is accomplished for which we hope and wait, thou shalt not lose thy reward."

I then turned away, but with reluctance, and bent my steps towards the village. Having become interested in Jesus the nearer I approached him, I desired, now that I had by so fortunate a chance beheld his parents, his family, and his home, to see also the synagogue where he had always worshipped, where he had also preached, and from the brow of the rocky precipice nigh unto which it stands, his fellow-citizens had not long ago attempted, in their passion, to cast him down headlong; from which miserable fate he had saved himself only by employing

for his deliverance the powers of God he had so often used, never for the injury, always for the protection or deliverance of others.

Passing along through the midst of Nazareth, I easily found, by following the directions I had received, the synagogue I was in search of. The doors were yet open, those who had been present at the morning prayers not having long departed. When I had entered and surveyed it, I inquired of a servant of the house for the place near by where the multitude had led Jesus with the purpose to destroy him. "That will I gladly show thee," he answered; "yet would it have been with more pleasure if I could have shown thee how and where they accomplished their purpose. The rocks are hard by, behind the building. Follow me." As he went before me but slowly, by reason of his halting upon a withered limb, I asked why they had sought his life?

"Thou art then a stranger in Israel?" he said. "I had taken thee for an inhabitant of these parts. Why they had sought his life! Father Abraham! that is a question for a Jew to ask. But mayhap you never heard this new prophet, as he calls himself?"

I said, "No, I have never heard him, but I desire to do so greatly."

"Better not," he answered, "better not; no good would come of it. He leads many away of those who do not know him as we do."

I said I had never heard evil of him, though I had heard so much of everything else.

"At that," he said, "I marvel greatly. What is there in Israel he attacketh not? What should stand had our young Nazarene his way? What to him, forsooth, are Moses and the prophets? What to him is it that the law was given of God, and since the foundation of the world has been the glory of Israel? His own word is better! Ay, sir, he sets aside Moses, and Abraham, and the prophets, as I do the beggarly rabble who would thrust themselves into the best seats of the

synagogue. I truly have authority in what I do ; we of Nazareth would fain know what his is ? It is not the men of Nazareth, who have sat and listened to the voice of the righteous Zechariah ever since the last Jubilee—the last, I mean, before that that hath just passed—who will soon take their teaching from a carpenter and the son of a carpenter. We are not fallen to that, though the people of Israel do esteem us as of the kennel. Would all deal with the young zealot as was done by us, his mouth were soon stopped. Verily I believe it will now be thought that Nazareth is coming up in the world : no other place hath stood so firmly for the law.”

“ Yet,” said I, “ you cannot deny the wonderful works which he does. What make you of them ? ”

“ I am not obliged,” he replied, “ to make anything of them : there are many ways of doing such things ; which is his way is not our matter. It is for us enough that a poor low-born mechanic here in our town saith, or gives us to believe, that he thinks he is the Christ, the son of David, and king of Israel ! Takes he us for those utterly devoid of understanding ? Never saw I the men of Nazareth to burn so with zeal for God as that day when, in these walls, which so many years, as I have said, have sounded to the voice of the holy Zechariah, this young limb of Joseph sought to get the ear of the people that he might declare himself and his foul blasphemies. No sooner found they what was his drift, than a holy and righteous anger caused them to rise as one man to purge Israel of such pollution. Furiously did the people rage, and drive him from the house on before them to this very spot—here is the place you seek, sir—that they might end him and his impieties at once ; but he was too quick for them, or, strange to say, the hands of those who stood near could not reach or touch him with all their striving, and so, by his arts, he escaped, and has not since sought the streets and synagogues of Nazareth, nor, as I think, ever will.”

"Methinks," said I, "such an escape from a multitude bent upon his destruction should convince you that God was helping him."

"We deny not," he answered, "his wisdom nor his works, and vain were it, truly, to deny what all ears heard, and all eyes saw; but whence he hath his power and his wisdom, as I have told thee already, each may believe as he listeth. For me, I believe God inspireth none such as those who go about to destroy what he hath before established by Moses, and set themselves up, therefore, as gods against God. Shall Jehovah build and then himself tear down what he hath built? He will carry his teachings and his works, if Israel will not listen, to the Gentile, will he! Let him. Is that the way he shall prove himself the Christ? If there hath been a Christ promised by the prophets, and if they have given him any office, it hath been that of one who shall exalt Israel more and more, and bring all men to bow before the law, not one who shall degrade her in the eyes of men, and bestow equal honours and favours on the cursed Gentile. What more needed we to show to one who hath eyes whence he came? Did his own kindred believe in him more than we? Truly did they not. Old Joseph is a just and a devout man, and hath brought up his offspring as one who loveth the Sabbath and the road to Zion; and I warrant you he took not so patiently the forward conceits of his son Jesus. Verily, when he first heard that Jesus had begun to teach, he set forth to withstand him, as one whom he judged not in his right mind. Who is my son, thought the good man, that he should set up for teacher and prophet? Nor any more regard did the rest of the household have for him, so that it was not long ere he was glad to take up his lodging elsewhere. Capernaum entertaineth him now; but, as I hear, they think not much more of his doings there, and over the lake at Chorazin and at Bethsaida, than here. To tell what I think the truth of his kindred

here in Nazareth, they would have borne longer with him, but that, notwithstanding he possessed such powers of doing wonderful things—as at Cana to change water into wine, and doubtless to change any one thing into another—yet nothing would he do of that sort for the advantage of his own family, but while he was profitable to others, left them to their labour and their poverty, which, thought they, would scarcely be were our brother Messiah and king of Israel; wherefore they give little heed to him any more, and deny him wholly.”

“Not wholly,” said I, “for it is within the hour that I have conversed with them.”

“Then it is of late,” said he, “that they think otherwise; and I remember me, I have heard they are again, at least some of them, a little softened towards him, seeing that he has been so set upon by others, and by Herod, who, it is affirmed confidently, will soon deal with him.”

Having satisfied myself with observing the place to which my guide had conducted me, and heard enough to make me believe that the Nazarenes deserved their ill repute in Judea, I left him, and returning again through the village, took my way towards Tiberias.

As I walked along and thought of all I had heard and seen, I could not but feel pity toward this teacher of Nazareth, whom all seem to allow to be not only of a life and manner entirely pure and innocent, but filled with acts of charity and love towards others; yet all seem inclined, at the same time, some for one reason and some for another, to injure, or at least to refuse to him their regard and confidence. They behold his works, and confess them to have all the marks of God, yet will not believe his words. His instructions, too, are held to be laden with a divine wisdom, to be worthy of any of the prophets of God who have gone before, yet do they fall upon hearts so little ready for them, or stuffed with notions so con-

trary to them, that they are dropped by the way-side and perish—save as here and there they reach, though afar off, souls like those of Judith, Ruth, and Joanna, when they sink in and are held as the heart's truest treasure. But when, with all my pity, I ask how it could be otherwise, I find myself obliged to say I know not; I cannot see. Were it not that Jesus gives himself out, though not plainly, but obscurely and covertly as it were, for Messiah, sure I am his virtues would secure the homage of all save the baser spirits among the priesthood. But while he claims so much, and yet lives as he does the life of a wanderer, in poverty and want, with publicans and fishermen for his only circle of friends and advisers, it cannot be otherwise than that so manifest a discordance between what he appears and yet claims to be should turn all against him. As I have before said, I have trusted that I might behold in him the marks, and all the marks, we look for in him whom we expect—and find him to be more than a prophet; but with what I learn now, I see not how the life and office of Messiah can consist with either the maxims he declares, or the life he leads; but time will show.

Prolonging, by much devious wandering, my way, I did not until nightfall reach the outskirts of Tiberias. The sun was just sinking behind the western hills as I entered the gates of the palace.

I found refreshment of every kind, for the soul and the wearied body, at the hospitable board of Joanna. She rejoiced greatly that I had seen those who were so well acquainted with the life and teachings of Jesus, though she grieved also that I had not found Jesus himself. This young woman is wholly possessed and swayed by the idea of this prophet. Of a devout mind, she has found only in Jesus such food for her soul as she desires. She knows not how, better than others, to explain his conduct; she only trusts that, with patience and forbearance on the part of the people, all expectations will be satisfied. Willingly

would she follow him as one of his disciples, and doubts not she should find all she looks for, notwithstanding that some, as she has learned, of those who were nearest to him, have abandoned him.

"How would Chuza," I asked, "agree to such a choice on your part?"

"Chuza," she answered, "much as he honours the law and the synagogue, honours such virtue as this that is seen in Jesus more; and though for himself he has no hope of Jesus, or faith in him as Israel's Christ, yet he doubts not his worthiness, and would never deny me my own belief, whatever it may be."

She looks with impatience towards the feast of Tabernacles, when she shall go up to Jerusalem and once more listen to his teaching. In the meantime she has collected from every quarter largely of his sayings, on which she feeds by night and day. She intreats me also to read, and that I may do so, promises to place them in my hands.

When, on the following day, I was summoned to an interview with Herod, it was determined that, with no more delay than should be needful first to see Beth-Harem again, I should set out for Rome; so that, after visiting the house of Onias, I shall soon be on my way towards the capital of the world; a place which, but so little while ago, I left with pain not to be described, and which now, but for thee, my mother, I should never willingly behold again. This letter will hardly be read ere I myself shall sit at your side.

In agreement with the prediction which closes the foregoing epistle, it was not many days before I parted from Herod in Tiberias, and set forth for Beth-Harem, nor did I tarry long there, ere I again set forth, and crossing over to Cæsarea, took ship for the Tiber.

While in Beth-Harem, I learned that Onias continued absent in the southern part of the country, not only performing trusts committed to him by Herod, but also making use of every means thrown in his way, or which he could devise, to increase his know-

ledge of Jesus, and become acquainted with his true character and designs. For this purpose he had visited Jerusalem, and at the Passover had sought Jesus, and followed him north as far as Samaria, hearing him and witnessing his works, when he again returned to Idumea, but with the resolve at the approaching feasts of the Pentecost and Tabernacles again to seek the capital and watch his course.

Of Zadok, Judith informed me that he had grown each day more fierce in his opposition towards all who were inclined to put their faith in either John or Jesus, that he had joined himself with other leading Pharisees in other parts of Peræa and Judea, whose object was to make or find occasion to accuse them of such offences against the law and the Roman power as should cause them to be imprisoned, or else to stir up the people to some act of violence. He had also used language which showed that they who were bold enough, contrary to the counsels of such as himself, to believe in Jesus, should be cast out of the synagogue, and suffer besides whatever evils might be inflicted upon them by the believing and the devout. He had become, since I had left Beth-Harem, exceedingly mad; and in the towns round about, in Jericho and in Jerusalem, had bound himself by solemn oaths to others of the same sect and the same temper, to purge the land, as they say, of blasphemers. It would not be easy, Judith thought, for Jesus to elude the watchfulness of these men, and the devices they would put in practice to impute to him such acts or such opinions as would rouse against him the passions of the people, and excite also the suspicions of the Roman government.

I visited the abode of the leper, where I found all the comfort possible to those who had been overtaken by such misfortunes. Ruth had sought diligently for all the intelligence she could procure of Jesus, and the opinions he had promulgated, of his character, life, and works, and from all that she could learn, had

become persuaded that he was in truth the prophet who should come into the world ; but especially was she guided by her conversations with Judith, and by the knowledge derived from the sayings of Jesus, of which, from various quarters, the daughter of Onias, like Joanna, had collected a large store. These served to convince her, as she said, that Jesus was too holy and pure to make any pretensions that were not founded in truth ; it was impossible that he who could advocate the cause of God and the most exalted virtue, in such a manner, borne out by such a life, could be false in any part of his conduct. If, therefore, he had declared himself to be the Messiah, she believed him ; and however much at variance his appearance and much of his language might be with what was looked for in that prince, she could not doubt that in the event he would vindicate all that he had uttered or done, and stand justified before the Jewish people. “How can such works as his,” she exclaimed, “be done but by the power of the Most High ? Who would not tremble to give them to an evil spirit ? and how can one, whom the spirit of God is with by wonders so astonishing, speak otherwise than as the same spirit of God shall direct ? Shall Jesus, by the touch of his hand, do the works of God, and at the same time, by the words of his mouth, utter lies which are of the devil ? It cannot be. As Jesus is reported to have said, ‘the same vine beareth not bad fruit and good fruit, the same spring sends not forth salt water and fresh, the waters of Genessareth and those of the Dead Sea.’ I believe, then, that because Jesus has declared that he is the Messiah of God, or even because he permits the people to believe that he is, therefore he is that person, nor shall any Zadok have power to pluck this faith out of my heart.”

In reply to this I said, that I could not for myself believe until I saw. When Jesus openly, in the eyes of the nation, assumed the name and the place which, as the king of the Jews, belonged to him, I would

acknowledge him and forsake every other; but in no other event. I required the evidence of my eye and ear—the correspondence of Jesus to the prophecies. Everything in the manner of life, the character, and maxims of Jesus, was against the probability that he was the Christ, and in its favour only his declaration—if in truth he had ever made such declaration, for it could not be shown beyond a doubt that he had—that he was so, and his power of working miracles. I must have more than this. When he will listen to the importunities of those who throng him, of some of the wisest and most powerful in the land, and stand openly and publicly forth, then it will be time enough for one who would be governed by more than his fancies to bend the knee and follow him.

Ruth I found, however, too firm a believer to be shaken by anything I could say, either in earnest, or simply by way of dispute; not Judith herself is of a firmer faith. She is fully bent upon going up to the feast of Tabernacles when it shall come, and taking with her her father, that if she can obtain the favour of Jesus he may possibly be healed; of this her heart is now fullest. Long ere this would she have sought his presence, but that Levi has refused steadfastly, saying that a life like his was not worth the prolonging, seeing that for so many years he had been shut out from the knowledge and affections of all who once knew him. His Ruth had now found those who loved and would care for her though he were away; it was all he wanted; and fain would he be now away and at rest. He would not, even as Job had said before him, “live away.” But to such things Ruth made replies that have touched his heart too tenderly to be withstood, and she has obtained his consent to go up to the feast, unless Jesus should first perchance come into Peræa. They were to go up in company with Judith.

When I had thus remained not many days in Beth-Harem, I departed for Rome. At Cæsarea, I did not

fail, as soon as I arrived, to seek out the Greek Zeno, to whom I owed so much. He was rejoiced to see me, and with great satisfaction went over the events of the few but disastrous days I had passed in that capital. He at once drew me with him, with quick consent on my part, to the ancient site of the synagogue, and the house of the widow of Sameas. The tower for the colossus of Tiberius I found to have rapidly sprung up, and nearly at its intended height. The ruins of the house of the widow of the wine merchant still blackened the ground, and bore testimony to the violence that had been committed. It needed not much aid from the fancy to believe, as I wandered among them, as the shadows of evening were falling, that the forms of Anna and Philip were to be seen among the tossing branches of the trees, or flitting among the fallen columns and crumbling walls, their voices mingling with the sighings of the wind as it swept over them. It was not easy to depart from a spot still so beautiful in itself, and where so many objects served to remind me of those whom I in so short a time had come to love so well, and from whom I had been so violently separated. As I turned away, sad with such recollections, I inquired of Zeno if it was known where now the widow of Sameas was dwelling. "In the capitol," he answered, "of Philip, whither she had at first fled. Deeming it more for her safety that the place of her retreat should be known to none save a few of those to whom she had intrusted her private affairs, she had strictly concealed it until within a brief space, when it had come to be well understood in Cæsarea that her home was in Cæsarea Philippi. But at the same time it was affirmed that she was about to remove to Rome, where, if rumour deceive not," added Zeno, "thou wilt doubtless find her on thy arrival. Procla would gladly have recalled her to her ancient home, and have caused her dwelling to be rebuilt, but with all her address she could not in this overcome the obsti-

nacy of Pilate, who professed to entertain apprehensions of new difficulties, if any more lenity were shown towards those who had in any degree been parties to that revolt, but in truth he was governed by his avarice, which could not spare the gains which by the sale of so valuable an estate would flow into his purse."

These things being so, having seen Zeno, and visited the spots so dear to memory, I set sail with a fair wind for Italy, and without any adverse events reached its shores in safety. My mother I found as I had left her, and with her, now her companion and inseparable friend, the mother of Philip and Anna. Our tears flowed afresh as we recounted the events of those few fatal days which deprived a mother of her only children, and robbed me of one whose image ever floats before me, and can never be supplanted by another.

When the first cares of arriving after so long an absence were over, and I had once more traversed the streets of Rome, with every stone of which, owing to the activity of my youth, I had familiar acquaintance, and by such pilgrimages had revived a thousand recollections, partly agreeable and partly painful, I turned to the affairs which had brought me so far, and sought the presence of Sejanus. Yet before I conversed with him, and had only gathered the knowledge concerning him, to be had for the asking at the corner of any of the streets of Rome, I discovered that all the reliance upon him on the part of Herod was that of a person upon a phantom or shadow; for I found, that though the form of Sejanus was to be seen about the streets, in the forum, in the senate-house, and in his own sumptuous palace, having the same outward shape as ever, yet it now appeared and departed without, as it were, being noted whether it came or went; the people and the nobles offering no longer that worship which had once been paid as to a god. I found, in a word, that the sun of Sejanus was overclouded

and about to set—that the word had gone out from Capreæ, and this man, who so little while ago held all Rome and the world in the hollow of his hand, was, though still glittering in all the wonted trappings of his high place, of no more weight in the minds of men than a poor painted player-king with his tinsel robes and paper crown. Letters, dark and mysterious, have come from the emperor to the senate, which, while they still salute Sejanus with the titles that have ever been lavished upon him, leave it not to be misunderstood by any who are not as blind as the favourite himself, that suspicions have been awakened in the breast of Tiberius—that native home of distrust and jealousy—which never can be removed but by the destruction of the miserable man against whom they have been raised. The steps of him who so lately stood almost within the circle of the throne itself, are now dogged by spies and informers, who report every word, and look, and movement, to the gloomy tyrant, who will not long be without a pretext for his accusation. When the blow would fall it was not easy to conjecture, as a plausible or popular ground must be found for extreme proceedings. In the meantime, as I have said, so far as could be judged by the apparent honour and power of the minister, he held the same rank as ever in the estates of Rome.

When I sought him, and by credentials with which I had been furnished, made known the authority under which I approached him, and the objects I had in view as the messenger of Herod, it did not surprise me that I was received, and the projects and proposals of Herod considered with the same care and interest as if he were still in the plenitude of his power, and kings and kingdoms hung upon his word. So insensible was he to his true position, or so insensible did he choose to appear, that I was almost ready to believe the rumours in the city were false, and that a terrible retribution awaited the inhabitants for the

slights they had of late shown this second-hand tyrant. A little reflection, however, convinced me that my first impressions were right, and that my interview with Sejanus was a mere empty form—a scene in a comedy, or shall I rather say, a comic scene in a tragedy ; it could be followed by no act on his part. His promises were, indeed, many and reiterated, of lending to Herod all the support of which he had formerly spoken, but they were like the promises of a man who—as the possessed person in the old prisons of Beth-Harem—though clothed in rags, yet imagines himself in possession of the riches of Solomon.

No sooner had I terminated this interview, and sought further information of the truth in regard to Sejanus from those who well knew both the emperor and the parasite, than I wrote to Herod, laying before him, borne out by incontestable evidence, the account of the actual state of political affairs, and the failing power of the once great minister. I assured him that the depending upon aught from Sejanus, either in the way of money or forces, was vain ; that so far from possessing any influence in Rome, so as to attempt any such movement now, as might, perhaps, with much probability of success, have been attempted a year before, he was at present little more than a private individual, whom all looked upon as fallen under the displeasure and suspicions of Tiberius, and destined to speedy ruin ; that whatever it was in his purpose to do in Judea, must be done with his own strength, unless, relinquishing his plans concerning Herodias, he could bind himself in league with the kings of Arabia and Parthia ; that, however, although nothing was to be looked for in Rome from political union, yet much was to be expected from the men of wealth among the Jewish population, which was large in numbers, and, as he knew, distinguished for the riches they had amassed. To these, if it were his pleasure, I would devote myself, and engage them to

lend of their abundance to the restoration of the kingdom of Israel ; and it was not to be doubted, so constantly were their eyes directed that way, and their hopes to one day returning and dwelling in their native land beneath the power of their own king, in the new age that should unfold, that they would be impatient to bestow in proportion to their substance to secure that great and glorious end. These, with other things, I communicated to the tetrarch not many days after I had been in Rome.

The letter which I thus despatched proved to be the termination of my intercourse with Herod, for upon receiving it, and thereby learning beyond any further doubt that hopes of alliance with Rome against herself could no longer be indulged, and that in consequence any immediate action was rendered impossible, he turned toward that other project which he had never honestly abandoned—the marriage with Herodias, and the divorce of the daughter of Aretas. He, indeed, wrote to me after receiving the letter I had sent, and in it he hoped that I would continue to be engaged in his affairs in the manner I had proposed, and if I could not derive any longer advantage from Sejanus, to do what I could with the Jewish inhabitants. But it was not long after this, that in a letter from Judith and Onias, I learned that he was bent upon accomplishing his designs with the wife of Herod Philip. When this was made known to me, I at the same moment abandoned his cause, not being able to persuade myself that prosperity could attend the measures of one who should openly put from him the fear of God ; nor being ready to take any part in the injury of two men so holy as John and Jesus for the advantage of one so wicked as Herod. The necessity thus laid upon me of suddenly withdrawing from an enterprise to which I had now so long bound myself, of whose success, wisely conducted, I could not doubt, with the success of which I deemed the glory of Israel to be so closely

interwoven, gave me no little pain, and I could not for a time but hope and almost believe that Herod would return to himself, and, repenting of his evil designs, resume, on his own strength, the undertaking he had so foolishly postponed to the gratification of his passions. But what I soon learned from Judith put an end to all such expectations. She thus wrote:

“Now, Julian, let me trust that you will finally and without reserve abandon the affairs of Herod, when I shall inform you further of the course he has pursued. Never have I been able, notwithstanding all the efforts of Onias, and all the reasonings and persuasions of his nephew of Rome, to entertain other opinion of Herod than that which I have often expressed. I believe that you will now join yourself in judgment to me, and think of him even as I do; yet of my father, I lament to say it, have I no hope that he will ever be separated from one to whom he seems bound by a spell cast over him by evil spirits, rather than by reasons which his own mind has weighed and can calmly justify.

It is not easy to say why it was so, but certain it is, that your presence was a restraint upon the tetrarch. It may have been because he stood in some dread of your plain speaking, or, which is more likely, because he hoped to derive advantages through your means which he could secure in no other way so well. No sooner were you gone, than as if he had been relieved of some load, or had escaped from some painful obligation, he gave himself at once to the passion which many asserted he had mastered, and not only resorted immediately to Jerusalem, but entertained Herodias in the most open manner in his own palace in Tiberias. This was followed by consequences easily foreseen—the sudden departure of the daughter of Aretas for her father’s court, and letters breathing revenge and war from the insulted king. These things coming, as could not be otherwise, to the ears of John, he proclaimed publicly the wickedness of the tetrarch, and

denounced him to the people as a despiser and transgressor of the law, and one who, through the violence and wickedness of his passions, was about to bring all the evils of war upon his country. But, alas! he spoke into the ears of the deaf, and to hearts too corrupted by the like iniquities to be touched by the admonitions of that stern but righteous man: they heard him, but heeded him not. Enough were found of the same stamp with the king, who, in his condemnation by the prophet, had heard also their own, to carry to his ears a report of all he had said, which, inflaming the king to a high pitch of rage, he sent out his soldiers, seized John, and hurried him off to the dungeons of Machærus, where he has since been strictly confined, and out of which it is not difficult to see he will never come. Herod, indeed, hath some fear and even reverence of him; for, with all his vice, he stands in dread not only of invisible spirits of evil, but of spirits of good also, of everything that is mysterious and obscure, and, therefore, he might release him when his end was once gained, and for the reason also that he may apprehend commotions among those of the people who hold John to be a prophet; but if such should be the inclinations of his own not merciful but cowardly heart, there will be none such in the bosom of her to whom he will now ally himself, who hath long treasured up her anger against the bold peasant who has dared to thrust himself in between princes and the accomplishment of whatever designs they may please to entertain, and hath been one cause at least of so long a postponement of an event which she, even more than Herod, has sought to compass. We doubt not, with the next arrival of news from Jerusalem, to hear of their adulterous marriage.

Of Jesus we learn that few miracles have of late been wrought, but that he employs himself in preaching in the synagogues the truths which he conceives to be most essential, and in which the differences are

to be discerned between what he holds to be best and the ancient law of Moses. But, so far as I have learned, he seems to be rather a restorer of the law to its true significance, and a rebuker of prevailing corruptions and abuses of it, than one who would overthrow and destroy it, of which purpose some fail not to accuse him."

I often, at this time, received letters from Judith, informing me of the progress of Jesus, and of the oppositions he encountered, and of herself seeking him in Galilee, and becoming a constant follower and hearer. Of her own opinions at this time—the period just preceding the feast of Tabernacles—I gathered that, with the common people, she received him with an undoubting faith as the Messiah. "The Pharisees," she says, "are exceedingly bitter against him, and by the power they hold in their hands, they deter many from following him, and confessing themselves disciples. But the lower sort, who have nothing to lose, neither place nor estimation, laugh at these tyrants, and crowd about him gladly and fearlessly. I consort with these; sit and here with them, and believe with them. They doubt not, and how should I doubt, that Jesus will prove all we wish and all we want; since it is impossible for those who will see and hear him to associate deceit with him, or any purpose or design other than those which he plainly avows. Now he declares that he hath come from God; that the prophets have foreshown him as he who is to come; that the kingdom of God is shortly to make its appearance and be established; and that he is the Christ who shall reign over the new kingdom. Can it be otherwise than so, since he has declared it? I think not. And oh, how peaceful and hallowed a people would they be over whom Jesus shall reign as king! How different he from the other kings of the earth! With what new honours will he crown the good, with what new terrors will he strike the wicked! In his teaching, he ever invests with the highest praise the virtues of

sincerity, contentment, gentleness, chastity, and kindness towards all. Shall not his own government proceed upon the maxims which he has thus publicly proclaimed as those which are to be considered superior over all others? How certainly then, if these things shall be so, will wars and contentions cease, and violent and ambitious men no longer be among those who shall rule in Israel, and the soft delights of peace, and justice, and mutual deeds of love, and the sincere worship of God, and the observance of the law, unperverted by the traditions of the elders, honoured and exalted in the eyes of all, cover the earth, and make it as a delightful garden before the Lord! Why, why does Jesus thus delay to assume the place that is his, and lay the foundations of the kingdom whose approach he has so plainly announced? The power with which God has intrusted him must be amply sufficient to make his way plain before him, and obtain an easy conquest over whatever opposition his enemies, the Pharisees and the council, might array against him. It is this delay that disheartens many, causes others to doubt, some to despair, and not a few to abandon him; for, say they, we can see no reason why he should any longer refuse to do what so many urge upon him. We have seen miracles enough, we have left our homes to follow him, and we now are impatient for the consummation, and think we have a right to demand it. But others say, if such an one as Jesus is to reign in Israel, then as he is to govern by rules and maxims so different from those of other princes, it must be necessary to lay deep among the people a right preparation. They must be brought to expect and to desire not such a state of things as has existed under Herod and other former kings, but such as he has constantly predicted as to constitute that which is to be now founded, and this can be done only by often and to the whole people of Judea—in one place as well as in another, from the west to the east, and from the north to the south—

declaring the principles on which it is to be conducted, and obtaining the willing assent of all hearts. I do not say, Julian, that there are not misgivings among even such as these, and that they are not often startled and alarmed, and made to doubt by words which Jesus uses, by slights put upon the chief men of the nation, by his free departures from the common practices of the most devout, and dark intimations that he himself is destined rather to suffer future evils than to reign as a prince. But these moments and causes of apprehension or doubt, are as nothing in comparison with the deep foundations of our hope. For myself could I be well content—which Onias ever ascribes to my Samaritan descent—were Jesus to be no other than a teacher and reformer, a preacher of righteousness, and a restorer of the law. Yet am I at the same time ready to acknowledge that I look with greater expectations of good to Israel—of greater good than could otherwise accrue—which Jesus could effect were he not only prophet but king also. How would he then stand above all others a just model for all the princes of the earth! a God among men, of whom the true worship should be copying and displaying his virtues, receiving and practising the righteous principles of his government! And in saying this, confound me not with those who throng the steps of Jesus but with expectations of some advantage so soon as he shall proclaim himself, and who think not of him or his future kingdom as differing from other thrones and other monarchs from whom flow honours, powers, and riches, save that from Jesus these shall flow in fuller streams, and overspread the whole land of Judah and Israel. If I believe him king, it is a king the foundations of whose throne shall be righteousness, and its inscription, ‘Holiness unto the Lord;’ whose office it shall be, as the Lord’s Anointed, not more to subdue the enemies of Israel, than to exalt the law in the eyes of men, and cause it to be obeyed of every soul, and presently to gather all nations of the earth under its sway.”

Thus wrote Judith in one out of very many epistles which, while I dwelt in Rome, I constantly received, all of them together presenting a very exact account of the doings of Jesus, and the conduct and opinions of the people during that period. I would willingly have returned and passed this interval in Judea, but affairs of my mother, together with her unwillingness so soon to part with me again, kept me in Rome. But though in Rome, the state of Judea, and the works and teaching of Jesus, were with me the things of chief interest, and with the most of our people also, to whom I communicated freely of all the information I received. Not less than myself—many in a greater degree—were they roused and inflamed with the hopes excited by the miracles of Jesus, not doubting that he was the promised king, and would soon establish his reign. Not a few made every preparation which at a distance could be made—converting their estates into gold and precious stones—to remove from Rome to Judea as soon as the final elevation of Jesus should scatter every remaining doubt. They were indeed filled with wonder at the same things which caused so much doubt and dismay to the most devoted and devout Jews at home. They could not interpret his humble origin, and mean and lowly condition, nor many of the doctrines which were imputed to him; but neither, on the other hand, could they interpret his astonishing powers, except he were the Son of God; and thus a vague hope, notwithstanding many adverse signs, kept its place in their minds, and with every arrival of news from Jerusalem or Beth-Harem, they would look to have it confirmed by some new and more decisive event.

As for the Romans of the better sort, if they heard at all of the affairs of Judea, and the strange events given birth to there, it was only as of some story of magical illusion, or demon power, or some superstition of a people ever prone to wonder, and whose early history, as their own, abounded with many relations of a

similar kind, and so they gave little heed to any of the accounts which from time to time reached their ears. Some, indeed, who were more careful to distinguish things that differ, and not to take all that is like for the same, of whom there are ever but a few, thought that in Jesus there was somewhat which exalted him far above ordinary mortals, and which ranked him justly among divine beings; they doubted not he was a god descended for great purposes among men. Such opinions, it was well known, the emperor himself entertained; and to decide in matters of this sort—as indeed any question that called for the exercise of a shrewd and discerning judgment—no man in Rome was more competent than Tiberius. He possessed wonderful powers also of confounding a plain matter; but that was because he loved, and had some reason why he wished, to perplex the reader or hearer. He eagerly sought for all intelligence concerning the prophet as it arrived, and did much, by his inquiries and his conversation, to spread abroad among the higher classes a knowledge of what was going on in our remote and despised country.

Although I heard so fully of affairs in Judea through Judith, yet it was not until after the feast of Tabernacles that so much as a word came to me from Onias. When that festival was over, and Onias, Judith, and Ruth, had again returned from the city to their homes, I at length received a letter from him, of which I here preserve the greater part.

“Long ago,” says Onias, “did I purpose to write and give thee such information as I had gathered concerning the affairs of the king in this part of Israel, but my devotion to them hath been such as to leave little power for other things; but beside this, a greater hindrance still hath grown—how wilt thou marvel!—out of my following after Jesus, whose steps I have closely pursued, with but brief intervals of absence, since I first left Beth-Harem for Idumea. Yet though thy first thought, Julian, may be one of surprise and

wonder, thy second will be one of approval; for ought not they who would in so great a matter arrive at a judgment which their own minds shall afterwards justify, and which shall be in accordance with the truth of things, to seek the knowledge necessary for its foundation at the springs where it is to be found most abundant and most pure? Wherefore I determined, that whereas I had, up to the day when I left Beth-Harem, received all my knowledge of Jesus through the reports of others, and the rumours which were spreading over the country, of whose origin and authority none could give any account, I would no longer in such a matter trust to what might be error or falsehood, but myself resort to Jesus or his disciples and become a patient learner of the truth.

Thou knowest how at Beth-Harem I had ever laid a restraint upon the holy Zadok, when, in his zeal for the law and our chosen head, he was prompt on all occasions to revile the very name of Jesus and his followers, never doubting them to be deceivers, children of the devil, and that so they would be proved in the end. I was not willing that one, who, as it was reported to us, was so full of a divine spirit, whose life was so innocent, whose annunciation had been attended by such signs, whose own works were so astonishing, should be judged, as it were, in darkness, by such as had never for themselves sought the light, which for the seeking was easily to be had. For myself, moreover, I now confess it, it seemed to me that if all was true that was brought to our ears, there was a likelihood, almost bordering upon certainty, that this Galilean prophet was in truth the expected prince, veiling, for purposes which had not been explained, but were well capable to be explained, his greatness, and concealing himself under the humble guise and condition of a servant. Hardly was Judith herself more moved towards Jesus than I. It was, accordingly, with great expectations that

such favourable judgments would be established, and that, as a consequence thereof, I should abandon the cause of Herod, as thou hast now rashly done, that when I had reached Idumea I determined within myself to go up to Jerusalem at the Passover, for it was rumoured that Jesus would be there.

I went; Jesus came, as it was predicted he would do; I saw and heard him; I followed him from Jerusalem into the country round about in Judea, then into Samaria and Galilee, thence to Jerusalem again at the Pentecost and Tabernacles, and am now returned, even as I came forth from Beth-Harem, more than ever a Jew and a Herodian! The man of Nazareth has made no disciple of the vine-dresser of Jordan—who, as ever, is a follower of Moses and the prophets, and through them a believer in the redemption of Israel and the new kingdom of God. This faith and this hope shall no man take from me.

But was it at once, Julian, that I sifted out truth from error? and was it an easy task? Was the way smooth, with no yawning pits of danger and death, where the foot slipped in darkness? It was quite otherwise. I have escaped, yet as those who have passed through the fire, as those who have been snatched as Daniel from the jaws of the lion. There was that in Jesus that drew me towards him, as it were, with cords of iron and bands of steel, and there bound me; and like the foolish multitude, I had well nigh been held fast in the disloyal captivity. The same affections which forcibly took possession of their hearts were making their entrance into mine also, whether I would or not; and now, when I look about me, and perceive that through the good providence of God I am rescued, while the multitudes of the people are yet in bonds, I wonder while I rejoice. For, as I have said, there is that in Jesus which attracts and binds as by some magic force. Yea, such power, mysterious and not to be withstood, is seen to flow out even from the very countenance and form. I first be-

held him as he sat teaching in the gate of the temple called Beautiful, and sure I am my eyes never fell upon a human form of such majesty, yet also of such graciousness. What was great and manly prevailed by a large excess over what was only fair in both the shape and the features of the countenance, yet upon these the eye rested with delight for their exceeding comeliness, but much more for the expressions of love towards all, which shot forth in every look and every motion. He seemed ever as if anxious to know the wants and read the language which spoke in the faces of the humblest of the people who surrounded him, and who, without encouragement, would be slow to approach one so endowed with freedom. Accordingly, when he was speaking to them, and as much when he was not, his eyes were roving over the crowds, and his form bent towards them, rarely at any time sinking back into himself, or seeming as if there were any interest to engage him separate from theirs. But at such times as this happened, then a shade of sadness settled over his face, showing that oppressive thoughts were passing through his mind, which there were none to whom he could make them known, in order by counsel or sympathy to divide the burden. In truth, he was not seen ever to communicate with another, not even his chosen companions, as we are wont to do with those to whom we commit the whole of ourselves as to another self, in the knowledge that we shall be received aright, and that whatsoever is in us we may with freedom impart. This, indeed, was not surprising; for although they who approached him, even for the first time, immediately perceived that benignity and a fraternal spirit predominated in his character, and were beaming forth from his face, yet who, when they considered what mysterious alliances bound him to God and invisible spirits, could ever sit or converse with him as with another; could ever feel towards him but as a messenger and servant of Jehovah, in whom dwelt

his spirit and his power. Who could consort with him as an equal and a companion? Wherefore, wherever he is seen, in the city or in the fields, thronged by the multitudes, or pursuing his way from the city to the seclusions of the Mount of Olives or of Bethany, at a feast or in the house of mourning, does he seem ever and equally alone, as if not among the people at large had he found those with whom he could contract a friendship which had been denied by the members of his own household.

There being, in addition to all I have said, the appearances of truth and honesty in Jesus, an openness, too, which convinced the observer that nothing was kept back from the people which he had power to communicate, or which it concerned them to know, and a readiness to hear both the inquiries and the objections which any who approached had to propose, with a gentleness and a compassionate regard for all that gave assurance of a kind reception, even to women and children, if they could so far overcome the natural feelings of awe as to draw nigh to him, I have to acknowledge, Julian, that when I had once seen him and heard his discourse, I was as one bound to him; every feeling of the heart without any will of my own was freely his, and for a time I felt as if I, too, should number myself amongst his followers. I could not leave him; wherever he was, there was I also. I sought him in the temple; I joined the crowds that thronged him in the streets as soon as he was seen; day and night I followed him through the cities and villages round about Jerusalem, often without shelter or food, that I might lose none of the doctrine he taught, or fail to behold the wonders wrought by his hand. I was drawn along by a power I could not resist—the all-attractive power of wisdom and goodness. Not a Jew in the land, not one of Jesus's own disciples, was a more constant and devoted follower than I.

But what now? you ask. Have I given to Jesus

my allegiance? Do I find in him the king of Israel?—the Saviour for whom we wait? Not more, Julian, than in John. Yet for his virtues I would that Jesus were he, that he gave other signs than those he now gives that God hath sent him to fill that high office. But how vain the wish! for though in Jesus be seen many of the qualities and graces which would fit him for that trust, yet of others he possesseth not one. The love of those with whom he had to do certainly he would gain, and by that bond would he hold them in his service—which is simply the service of holiness; but utterly devoid as he is of those higher qualities which would fit him for Israel's king and deliverer, never would he draw toward him the perfect confidence of our people. They will follow him and hear him, as I have done, for the graciousness of his words and the strange attractions of his presence. They will witness his works, and stand astonished at a power so far beyond that of mortal man. But when he requires their faith in him as Christ, they will withhold it as I have done, they will draw back, and, notwithstanding their love and their admiration, will abandon him, some doubting whether he be in his right mind, some holding him a deceiver, others a minister of Beelzebub, others perplexed at least, and not knowing how or what to think.

As it is with the character of Jesus and the outward appearance, so is it with the doctrine he preaches; at first, and in many things, it captivates and charms, but afterwards those things are observed which not only agree not with, but oppose the very existence of that kingdom for which we look and pray; so that I have even conceived that he aimeth secretly to make hostile the heart of the people toward it. They of Rome are our enemies, yet he teacheth us to love them! They have enslaved and injured us, he would have us for this evil to do them benefits! Israel can be exalted only as she shall triumph over this modern Babylon. Jesus teaches

peace, and threatens that such as use the sword for conquest, or dominion, or revenge, shall, by the justice of God, be doomed to perish by the sword! Israel can rise to her ancient glory only as she shall covet glory, and honour, and a kingdom, and as her children shall, in these things, aspire to be what their fathers were; but Jesus teaches that they who follow him must seek after none of these things, but choose rather to serve others and be in obedience. If we, Julian, have read the prophets aright, the Messiah, and they who shall join themselves to him, will reap the natural rewards of those who deliver their country from oppression and invest her with power and dominion; but Jesus declares that they who follow him must look only to deny themselves any such expectations, and to prepare themselves rather for sufferings and adversities than for the enjoyments and honours we are accustomed to regard as our fitting recompense. And, moreover, while the zealous Jew, the descendant of Abraham, the disciple of Moses, hath been trusting that, under the Christ, he would be more than ever established, and the Gentile held as utterly accursed and alien before the Lord, Jesus hath more than hinted, he hath in his teachings plainly declared, that, henceforth, all shall be alike before God!—whom he even speaks of and addresseth, not as the God of Israel, but the father of all, not more disposed to crown Israel with peculiar honours than any other people that will keep the laws of righteousness!

What think you of these things, Julian, which I have heard many times and oft from the lips of Jesus, and which in various form make up the burden of his teaching? Are they the truths we look for from the restorer of Israel? Do they become the deliverer—him of whom the prophets have spoken as king of Israel in her restoration, even as God himself was her king of old? Thou thinkest even as I, and wonderest not that I turn from him—yea, and as thou

wilt behold, against him; for excellent as are other truths that he delivers, and irreproachable as is his life, yet is it not plain to one who looks around, that it is the necessary effect of his teaching to indispose the people towards the true Messiah, to plant in their minds notions and errors not compatible with his coming and exaltation? Greatly more than John does Jesus throw obstacles in the way, not only of Herod, but of any other, if Herod be not he whom God may send to accomplish our salvation. Wherefore, it grows to an obligation, whose force I feel more and more as I hear more of Jesus and witness more of his power over the people, to oppose him, and if it may be, separate the multitudes from him. To this work henceforth do I give myself; and if it should be said, behold the righteous zeal with which Onias resisteth Jesus! it may then be replied, at the same time, that if he stirs himself with zeal for the cause of God, it is not in ignorance that he doth it, for than he no one more constantly followed after the steps of Jesus, and listened to him more patiently. But who was he to suffer his private affection for this wonderful man to stand between him and what he owed to the law, to Israel, and to the God of Israel?

By other things also, have I been at first troubled and confounded, but at last strengthened in this resistance I purpose of Jesus. When, soon after you, Julian, had set forth for Tiberias, and I for Idumea, I sought and listened to the teaching of Jesus, I found that which I expected—a prophet of God clothed with powers such as I believe were never before, save unto Moses, granted to a mortal man. The people about me took him for the Son of God and king of Israel—no less; and truly, when I either listened to his wisdom, or witnessed his wonderful works, I too thought him, for those reasons, at least well worthy to be he whom God was at this time to send into the world. But then other things caused doubt: why, if

he was the Christ, did he not openly and with a loud voice so declare himself? Whom should he fear? Were he the Christ, indeed, who would receive him so gladly as the Jews of every sect? Even Herod would have laid aside his hostility, would he have but assumed the state that should mark the Christ. Was it the Romans he should fear? What were they to one whose arm was the arm of God? They truly would have had a controversy with one who claimed of them the sovereignty of Israel. But could not he, at whose word the son of the widow of Nain came forth from the grave, summon forces before which those of any earthly power must fail? Were Jesus the Christ, why, when we have urged him to do so, hath he steadfastly refused to give a sign which we could not doubt that he was so—a sign in the heavens, or in enterprises he should set on foot, or in those demonstrations of kingly rank and power to which not one would refuse his faith? These he hath not given, but mocked our urgency with the figure of Jonah, who, having been three days in the whale, so he, in like manner, should be three days in the centre of the earth—a riddle which none can read. Jesus, moreover, hath violated the requirements of the law, setting it at naught, which he, who came to restore and magnify the law, could never do. The Sabbath is to him as another day for the freedom with which he sets aside its requirements in favour of that which he may wish to do, saying, that its observance should bend to many of the necessities of man—which truly many a Hebrew is already, without instruction, prone enough to do. But from the Messiah we should look to see its observance, as of all the law, carried to a higher pitch, and men taught how they may keep it, even with the zeal of Ben-Ezra of Cæsarea, or Zadok of Beth-Harem, yet without hollowness or hypocrisy. Why doth he cast contempt upon the Pharisees, the council, the chief men, the elders of Israel? Among whom, if there be some wicked, there are many

righteous; and on whom, he who came our redeemer, would lean, whose aid he would seek, but by whose power, should they be provoked, must he miserably perish. Whence is it that Jesus, if Messiah, often when the Jewish opposers and disbelievers revile and reproach him, is heard to declare, that if it be that they turn from him, another people, from the east and the west, the north and the south, shall come in and possess the inheritance of the children of Abraham? that Gentiles and idolaters, accursed and hated of Jehovah, against whom in olden time his own arm was lifted, shall now, in the age about to unfold, for which we have waited so long, receive the blessing and the honour, while Israel shall be shut out, Jacob shall be counted as the heathen? Why, as he now doth, claiming for himself the kingdom, goes he thus abroad as a wanderer, without home, or power, or friends? Why for his chief advisers and companions does he choose fishermen, or publicans, or women, that are of society outcasts? Why speaks he of sufferings, that are inevitable, to overtake him? Nay—for such things has he said—why speaks he of death, as if it were for him an inevitable lot, from which there can be no escape? Are these the marks of Messiah? The Messiah lives for ever! his kingdom is everlasting! so say the prophets. What shall we think of him, what must we believe, who, confronting the prophets and setting them at naught, saith that he is the Christ who was to come, yet shall be no king, and shall die by the hands of violence? Verily while such shall be his language, it is not difficult to foresee that such will be the end at which he shall arrive; for already are there those among the Pharisees, and of the priests at Jerusalem, who seek his life, and will have it, if human cunning and force can prevail against one endowed with such powers as those of Jesus. They will not longer bear that, what they esteem as blasphemous perversions of the prophets, shall be uttered in the hearing of the multitude, and

the great office of the Messiah of the Jewish people brought down to the level where he would place it.

When, during the long period that I have followed the steps of Jesus, I have sought him and conversed with him of these things, and have urged him to delay no longer, but if he be the Christ to declare himself openly, he has said that I have misconceived the nature of that office; that he has come a teacher of divine truth, not a prince and king; that his office is to redeem mankind from sin, not to reign over them on the throne of Israel; and that he has long and often declared himself, but that the people will not understand or receive him. I have replied, that when the prophets have spoken of the Christ, it hath been of him as the king of Israel and Judah, and it was impossible that the people, who have dwelt upon those promises so long, should look for any other person than such an one. He has answered, that when the prophets speak of a kingdom, they have intended a kingdom not of force, but of truth and righteousness, of peace and love; and then he hath gone on and painted, as a picture before the eye, the felicity of coming ages, when men should be wholly swayed by the love of God, and ceasing to desire any other conquest, should be satisfied with a victory over themselves and over sin. I have freely acknowledged the greatness and excellency of what he hath thus said, and the blessings inconceivable that would be conferred upon Israel by the prevalence and dominion of such a faith, but have added, that as Jews we were bound to be governed by our Scriptures and the law given by Moses, and that while they stood and we revered them, and held by their teaching, we could believe no otherwise than as we had done. It was not one only, but the whole people who, for so many ages, and now more than ever, because their oppressions were great and the set time had come, in the Christ looked for a king and saviour; and should so many wise and righteous men have

been left in so great an error? He answered, that it was the temper of the people, their desire of a certain thing, that had caused them so long to misjudge the prophets, and to believe only a part of what they had said; but if they would hearken as well to Isaiah as to Daniel or Moses, they would learn and would believe that the Christ was to be a sufferer rather than one who was to enjoy prosperity, to be a servant rather than a monarch. And then he expounded that long Scripture where the prophet speaks of one enduring many things, and at last, as a lamb was led to the slaughter, suffering death itself for the sins of the people, that by his stripes they might be healed, and said that it was all spoken of the Messiah, who can found his new kingdom of righteousness only by first passing through suffering and death. I answered, that what he had said was so contrary to the present belief and hopes of the nation, that they never would receive it; they would set the united voice of a whole people against his, which was but that of a single person, and abide by it. To receive the doctrine he had delivered was more impossible to the Jew than even to deny and blaspheme Moses and the prophets. The Jew was now looking for his redemption and the glorious coming of the deliverer, and he would sooner renounce his name than forego the hopes which give to that name its highest honour. He only answered with sighing, that the heart of the people was too much set upon such hopes ever to believe in him, and it would only be when his death had opened their eyes and softened their hearts that the truth would break upon them.

These and many other things did we discourse of, in all which he showed himself to me, as to the people, gentle and compassionate, not looking that one should on the instant renounce his present persuasions, but rather willing to wait till truth should enter in its own way and time, overcoming one by one, and without force, the errors or prejudices of the mind. It is only

toward the Pharisees, and even the baser sort among them, to whom he ever speaks in tones of angry reproof—men who approach him only to pervert his speech and stir up against him the passions of the multitude.

And Julian, do you now doubt where stands Onias? Yet am I filled with admiration, even as I was at first, with the virtues and character of Jesus. But sure am I, at the same time, that he deceiveth himself, that he misconstrueth the prophets, and while he vainly thinketh himself to be the Christ, is indeed perhaps, in the counsels of God, Elias or the prophet who should go before—whether to announce Herod or some other, who can tell? As the Christ of God—the promised Messiah—I reject and deny him! and this notwithstanding his birth, the voice at his baptism, and his miracles: he agreeth not with the prophets; he is not that great one. While he claims to be so, he is as one blinded, and led by the blind; he deceiveth his own soul; and the foolish people, who have no power to discern their right hand from their left, throng him, and with their worship and flattery help to increase the mischievous delusion. They give their faith to him, and he giveth his faith to them; they believe he will yet show himself their king, and he believeth that, in some mysterious manner, he shall yet be ruler and king over them. But did they clearly comprehend what the kingdom is which, as I judge, he meaneth when he speaks of one, many fewer would there be to put their hope in him. They, however, can understand no such thing; but stand waiting each moment for the time when he shall shine forth in the glory of his new authority.

Of Herod's affairs, I scarcely need write to thee, since thou hast forsaken him. Yet will I say, that never have they seemed so prosperous as now. Allied now to one whose inward power is hardly less than that of the great Herod, and every way equal to that of Antipas, to one moreover who is of the same royal

house, the alien and the heathen being banished, as is fit, from the land of the elect of God, what prospect of success and glory opens not before him? John, who alone dared to lift up his voice against the king, reaps his reward in the dungeons of Machærus, while his foolish followers wander about as sheep who have lost their shepherd; some of them having resorted to Jesus, but the greater part still holding together as a society by themselves, not less hostile toward the rival of their master, Jesus, than toward the persecutor, as they judge him, of their master, Herod. But from them nothing is to be apprehended: they are few and weak. And concerning Jesus, though it is certain that now the greater part of the people are with him, and by his virtues and his powers he hath bound them to himself through their reverence and love of his character, and the expectation of advantage from his miracles, and of every kind of good so soon as he shall enter upon his glory, yet is it equally certain that all the persons in authority, the leaders of the Pharisees, the principal Scribes, the priests at Jerusalem, and the council, are with utmost bitterness opposed to him, and seek his destruction. Though the smaller body, they are the more powerful, and will doubtless in the end prevail. Herod, moreover, by his letters and his messengers, continually stirreth them up, and infuses a new hostility; not that they need urging to a work into which they throw themselves of their own accord, and with all the force inspired by a temper of revenge for injury and disappointed hopes. Herod might well have pursued his first plan, and intermeddled not, for without his aid no one thing, not already come to pass, can be more certain than that the enraged Pharisees will soon accomplish the destruction of Jesus. Already have they directed the suspicions of Pilate and the Roman authorities against him, as one who plots revolt in the state—as one who, in secret, speaks of a kingdom here in Judea, which he has been commissioned to set up, which is

to swallow up all other kingdoms, until it become universal. These things, and many more of the same kind, have been reported to Pilate and the powers in Rome, but without any immediate effect, such as was desired; for the procurator, upon diligent inquiry through those who have followed Jesus, has declared that he finds no ground of accusation in what they have reported, the language of Jesus having no regard, so far as they could learn, to any power that is to be set up and established in Judea, but to some mysterious institutions, of which no clear idea could be formed, except that they seemed to have respect rather to what concerns the right conduct of life and the founding of a kingdom of righteousness, than to enterprises that would interfere with the laws of the empire. Nevertheless, though little may be now apprehended, the suspicions of Rome have been excited toward him, and it will be wonderful indeed if they should not beget the consequences which suspicions once engendered rarely fail to do. Although, Julian, I have not as yet, myself, engaged in any action against Jesus or his disciples, yet can I not lament, but must rejoice, that ere long he will fall before the many enemies that are gathering around him, and so the way be left clear and unobstructed for the exalting of the rightful king. The Scribes and the rulers, who, on the first appearance of Jesus, were so prompt to believe, thinking that He had come who should confirm them in their honours and raise them higher, in their vexation and rage that Jesus has courted them not, but publicly assailed them and exposed their errors, and as it were expelled them from the kingdom, whatever it may be which he came to found, will, without aid from any quarter, accomplish his ruin."

Such was the language of Onias at this time.

Greatly did I desire once more to visit Judea, but the same reasons prevailed to keep me in Rome. Yet with such frequency did I receive intelligence of the

whole life and doings of Jesus from Onias and Judith, that scarcely could I have known more had I myself been a follower of the prophet. From these letters I would willingly transfer large portions, but must forbear. Especially would it please me to present here the many letters of Judith, in which it would be seen how deeply and how truly she penetrated and comprehended the character of Jesus—with some remaining errors indeed—and the nature of the services which it was his purpose to perform for his nation and the world, of which so few, hardly even his nearest followers, comprehended the least, but which time has since revealed to all. But these also must be passed by.

It was about the time of the feast of Dedication that Judith wrote thus:—"When we thought that the wonders concerning Jesus had come to an end, new ones have unfolded to perplex and astonish us. We now sit still, waiting to behold what shall be the issue; for in vain, utterly in vain, were it for the hand of man—though that of Herod, or of a thousand Herods—to be raised, while the visible hand of God reveals itself over the whole length and breadth of Israel. In very deed doth God now dwell on earth! When John appeared, we deemed that a prophet had surely arisen. When Jesus was proclaimed by a voice from heaven, we could not doubt that one greater than any who had gone before had come. But what shall we say now, when of those who have been the near followers of Jesus, his chosen disciples, a multitude as it were, possessing the same power as Jesus to heal diseases, to drive out devils, to raise the dead, have proceeded forth from him and penetrated every region of the land, preaching the kingdom of God, that it is now nigh at hand, and to show that they preach with the authority of Jesus and God, working the most surprising miracles wherever they go? The people are in amazement. Save a few, all believe that now the kingdom will

shortly appear, and Jesus reign in Israel. 'What else,' they say, 'can mean so astonishing a preparation? Were the heavens and their hosts to fall on the earth, or to pass away, the event were not more wonderful than the things that have happened among us, and to what other end can they point than the founding of that kingdom to which, for these thousand years, the whole people of Israel have been constantly looking? We no longer doubt that our eyes, even ours, shall now behold the salvation of Israel, the redemption of Judah. We indeed cannot tell why he who shall so soon sit upon the throne of David, who utters the wisdom of God, and doth the works of God, still appeareth as a servant. Neither can we tell why he prophesieth suffering and pain, and even death, as to overtake himself. This confounds us. But while things so wonderful of another kind, and which are evidently of God, are taking place, we are content to wait in respect to other matters, and trust that we shall in due time be made to know clearly what now perplexes us.' Thus judge and speak the great multitude of the people. Many of the chief men also and rulers believe in Jesus, and but for shame or fear would openly confess him. I hear of those who, both in Jerusalem and elsewhere, have gone to him secretly, with the purpose to inquire into his designs, and unite themselves to his cause. Fain would the people compel him to declare himself and make no more tarrying, but assume the place they are sure is his, and raise Israel to her proper glory. And alas! why will he not do so? How incomprehensible is the delay! All men stand waiting; all are sure that he who can do the works of Jesus, and who hath now bestowed the same power upon so many, can be no other than the Son of God, the king of Israel; yet to-day is as yesterday, and he still refuseth to hearken to our intreaties; he still wanders through the land, scattering indeed the light of his truth and his virtues everywhere, but is otherwise as if he were the servant of servants, soiled with the

way, overcome by fatigue, often insulted by those set on by the priests, having not where to abide in peace.

But why have I delayed so long to tell you that he hath of late been in Peræa, and on the banks of the Jordan, continuing a long time in the villages round about; that among other places he hath visited Beth-Harem; and that when there, exercising his power of healing upon the sick and the possessed, the lame and blind, he restored to sight and soundness the father of our Ruth! In vain had Ruth persuaded and urged that he should go up to Jerusalem; his desire of life was too little to tempt him so far on so doubtful an errand. But when it came to be certain that Jesus would soon arrive in Beth-Harem, then he declared that if that happened he would seek his help. He did so. And no sooner did the benevolent Jesus behold him and his wretched state, Ruth sitting at his side, and by her countenance saying more than any words could utter, no sooner did he hear his declaration, 'Sir, I believe; I believe that thou art from God,' than he touched him, the word was spoken, and he was restored whole and fair as when he was a merchant of Tyre. It were vain to describe the joy of Ruth when she beheld her father as she had not beheld him since the days of her extreme youth. Aloud they gave thanks to God and Jesus when they saw what was done, and declared their readiness to follow him wheresoever he should go; but he only desired them to live unto God, and the times would show them what they should do.

They returned with us to our dwelling, and this great restoration was celebrated in the evening by feasting, dancing, and music, and by the presence of all our friends from Beth-Harem, excepting Zadok alone, who, believing that the powers of Jesus, or professing so to believe, are of the devil, held it impious in us to receive aid from such a source, as it would be also in him to rejoice with us in what had been done. But beside him all were with us; and for the last time

Saturninus, who now soon, by the requisition of the procurator, departs with his soldiers for Jerusalem. He also, Julian, hath become a believer in Jesus, so far as one can believe in Jesus who believes not first in Moses and the prophets. Though he understands not much of our expectations of a Messiah, and considers not Jesus at all in regard to that office, he yet acknowledges in him a divine power and authority, and doubts not that he has come from God to be a teacher and reformer of mankind. His wisdom he had highly esteemed as he had perused it in the sayings, the parables, and discourses I had from many sources gathered together, and deemed it well worthy to proceed from a divine instructor, but it was not until he had himself often witnessed the works which he did, that he received him as a teacher come from God. As such he now readily acknowledges him. I wait impatiently for the time when he shall receive Moses and the law also, and Jesus, as not only a teacher come from God, but the Christ of Israel.

It was on this same evening there was present with us one who, having been long time a disciple and companion of Jesus, had turned from him at length, and ceased to have faith in him. He was from Bethabara, and even from the very first had been with him. Although it was to me a thing not to be explained how one who had companied with Jesus so long should forsake him, yet I was glad, seeing there was such an one, to be able to converse with him, to discover why he had deserted the society and cause of one who had every day given farther and higher proofs of his being the Son of God. 'Have you not,' I asked, 'found that in the company of Jesus for which you sought?'

'By no means,' he answered.

'But,' said I, 'you found wisdom and truth, gentleness and humani^{ty}, in Jesus, and were these no bonds to hold you?'

'I cannot deny,' he answered, 'that I found all

these; and whatever other virtues you may name, they were all there.

‘Did you then,’ said Onias, ‘doubt the works of Jesus? Saw you any reason to think them not works of God?’

‘Surely not,’ he replied; ‘whoever shall consort with Jesus, as I have done, will have the same persuasion that one so good and pure as he, could have no communion with evil spirits, that he has that the light of the sun, and the rains of heaven, and the flowers of the field come not from them—from none save God. Yet, at the same time that he believes this, will he believe with equal strength that he is not the Christ, as he declares himself to be, and as they who have joined him at first believed him to be.’

‘Yet,’ said I, ‘the greater part of those who first joined him still remain with him; and as for the people at large, whereas but few at first were persuaded that he was the Christ, now, since these new wonders have come abroad and the works of Jesus have been so many, all Israel, save the priests and Scribes, believe that he is the Messiah who should come, and that so in due time will he declare himself, to the shame of all gainsayers, doubters, and deniers.’

He answered and said, ‘that they who stand at a distance, and see and know only a part, cannot judge in such a case so well as those who are near, and see more, and with more exactness. Whose faith was firmer than mine, when, forsaking family and the affairs of life, I became a follower of Jesus? I was fain to think that in Jesus I beheld the long-expected deliverer; for in him I noted the signs of a prophet mighty in word and in deed, and like unto Moses; his words were with authority, his life was holy, and his works surely were those of God. It needed not reasoning and argument to produce conviction in my mind; I believed at first, as I did at last, with all the force of my mind, that he was a man from God. But was it for that—because he was a man from God, that we

had joined ourselves unto him? Was it for the works he could do? Not so; but, as you well know, because we deemed him the chosen of God, our deliverer and king.'

'And why,' asked I, 'do you refuse to believe him such? Is there any other in whom Israel may place such hope?'

'If there is not,' he replied, 'then may Israel well renounce all hope, for there is none in him. Not only have we, who forsook all and followed him, derived no advantage from our fidelity, but no prospect opens of such advantage in the future. Though we, who stood nearest him, have pressed him to declare himself, and lift up the standard that should show him Christ, though on all sides men throng him and urge him to delay no longer, but assume his throne, he hearkens not to us; nor only that, he sternly rebukes all such desires of honour, saying, that all who follow him with such desires will fail of their end; that instead of honour and worldly gain, they must rather look to deny themselves, and renounce even the common enjoyments of life; that instead of exercising authority over others, they must rather look for persecution and oppression; that life will be more likely to be lost in his service than gained. Then, when his discourse is not of this sort, subverting all the notions this people entertain of the looked-for Messiah, it is often dark and perplexing, so that when we hear we understand it not. To all which, of late, hath been added a frequent prophecy of his own sufferings and death, and of danger and suffering to all who are joined with him, so that it became clear to us, that whoever else he might be, he is not the Christ of God, and that, declaring himself to be so, he knew not his own office, and so having deceived himself, was ignorantly the cause of deceiving others also. For his holiness and his works willingly would I have remained with him; but having followed him not for these but for other things quite different, to which these indeed might be

additions, but the want of which they could not supply, it only remained to renounce a cause which no longer stood approved to our judgments. Many with me went back and walked no more with him.'

'You receive not, then,' I asked, 'the charges of the malicious among the Jews, that he is mad and hath a devil?'

'Surely not,' he answered, 'his words are not those of one that hath a devil, albeit they were sometimes such as we understood not; and for his miracles, though doubtless such works may be done by wicked spirits, we were sure of nothing more than that they were of God. Would he only have granted what we asked, a sign, namely, that he was the Messiah whom we sought, never should we have forsaken him; but while he still called himself the Christ, he would give no such sign as we required; so how, therefore, could we believe? He would have us to believe that the Christ was one who should teach excellent things, rebuke sin, reform the lives of men, and build up a universal kingdom of truth and holiness; but often as he thus discoursed and prophesied of the future, and that in completing his designs both he himself and we his followers should meet with opposition, suffering, and death, perhaps, we could not receive doctrines so contrary to the prophets, and to what from our youth we had been taught and had believed. We could only withdraw from one who seemed misled by dreams—deceived or deceiving. We were ready to take upon ourselves all the danger that would have come from the Romans, would he but have yielded to our importunities. There seems now nothing left to those who hope for Israel, but that they should join themselves to Herod.'

'And have the greater part of those,' I asked, 'who with thyself attended upon his steps, also abandoned him?'

'No,' he replied, 'they are still with him, hoping and believing still; which to me is astonishing; for

what hope can there be longer when so often, as hath already happened, his disciples, and the multitude together with them have been ready, as it were by force, to make him king, and he hath still refused? What can be done more for his exaltation than has been done? The loss and the ruin be upon his own head!

‘There they will be,’ said Onias; ‘the patience of those who, having regard to the virtues and innocence of Jesus, have forborne to do aught in opposition, while he hath this long time claimed to be the Christ, yet hath not shown himself as such, is well nigh spent, and when it shall be wholly, the fierceness of the rebuke of those whom he hath deceived will be in proportion to the hopes that have been fed only to be mocked. Other enterprises that, as I believe, would have joined all Israel together in one phalanx, have been postponed, have been arrested midway, that we might learn what should be the issue of this coming of the Nazarene; and now, behold the issue!’

I saw that the passions of Onias, with difficulty restrained of late, as they have been worked upon more and more by Zadok, were kindling, and said, ‘Perhaps this is not the issue; Jesus himself, as we hear, still points to the future, and of late there have been grander demonstrations than ever before of the power with which he hath been intrusted.’

Onias only answered, ‘we have been kept waiting long enough; we have seen miracles enough; let him now look to himself.’

Onias, with the stranger, then arose, and together disappeared among the deep shadows of the house.

The festivities were prolonged to a late hour. You would have rejoiced to behold the happiness of Ruth, hanging about her father, with all her joy breaking through her countenance, or else testifying the unusual exhilaration of her spirits in the swift mazes of the dance. This sudden increase of happiness and good fortune seems to have no ill effect upon her

character, but, on the contrary, draws forth and gives prominence to some parts of it which before were too little seen.

One thing only was mentioned in our long conversation with the disciple of Jesus, that seemed contrary to the common opinion which all entertain of his goodness. It concerns the imprisonment of John the Baptist, who, since the month preceding the feast of Tabernacles, has now lain in the dungeons of Machærus. We learned from this disciple that though Jesus had often been importuned by the disciples of John, and by his own, to interpose and deliver him (for it was feared that Herod, set on by Herodias, would destroy him), he would not comply with any such request; and that though John himself had sent messengers to him, asking if he were really the promised Messiah, thereby conveying the knowledge that himself was in prison, and expressing his astonishment that if Jesus were that great person he would do nothing for his release, yet neither would he take any notice of such messages, but was willing to leave the Baptist still in prison and at the mercy of the king. This conduct of Jesus, we were told, had filled all his followers with surprise; inasmuch as they, knowing the powers of Jesus, were persuaded that if he had chosen to exert them, it would have been but the work of a moment to effect his deliverance. They could not understand why one so virtuous as John, and who had in the beginning given his testimony so fully in behalf of Jesus, should not in return experience benefits at the hands of Jesus which it would be so easy to confer. Why Jesus hath been willing to act such a part I cannot explain any more than they, yet doubtless this may be said, that although he has not as yet interposed, he has not refused to do so, and may at some future time; but although he should never do so, I could still believe that one of so much goodness as Jesus, of whose goodness all Israel has had knowledge and experience,

would have reasons, we should judge, sufficient to give for withholding his aid, could we only arrive at a knowledge of them.

It was also evident, from what this disciple said, that the doubts which had been expressed by John concerning Jesus, whether he were indeed the Messiah, had greatly affected the body of his followers, who were led by it themselves into new and more serious doubts. If John, whom all had been accustomed to regard as a prophet, now questioned the claims of Jesus, and was disposed to deny them, and to hint that we must wait yet longer for some other to arise, much less, it was said, can we believe without some misgivings. Yet to set against these doubts of John, there were miracles more astonishing than ever, not only on the part of Jesus himself, but on the part of his chosen disciples also. Such demonstrations of power, and of his close connexion with God, through whom he had conferred such gifts upon his disciples, made it clear that there was no greatness or office which he had not as yet assumed to which he might with reason aspire and reach. It seemed to rest with himself whether he continued as he was or seized the throne of Judea, or in addition to that, the sovereignty of Rome, and the empire of the world itself! What could he not attempt and accomplish to whose command seem to be obedient all the forces of nature? Never, Julian, can I doubt whether this man, so endowed, is he for whom we look. Of our Christ he has all the marks, save only those of outward greatness and authority, and how easily at any moment may he arise and clothe himself with these? And, in the meantime, while we wait for this, we behold his perfect character and life, we profit by his divine wisdom, we hear the wonderful things he teaches of the future life and glory of man, of God, and the true worship which he requires. All Israel rejoices in his presence, and in the benefits of his works. And for me, though he added nothing to what he has already done, though

after having instructed us by his truth and his example, after having rebuked the Pharisees, purged the temple service, restored the law, and abolished the traditions, he should do nothing more, but end his life with the name and praise only of a prophet in Israel, and a benefactor of those with whom he lived, dying then as others die, or else, mayhap, being translated, as were Enoch and Elijah, not knowing the pains of death, I should be well content, and bless God that he had come, and that Israel had been permitted to rejoice in his light. But I doubt not, for one moment, that we shall see more than this; that our eyes, even ours, shall behold the salvation of our God; that this Jesus shall not only save us from our sins, but redeem us also out of the hand of our enemies."

Thus did it appear plain that Judith's faith in Jesus faltered not, but that, in the face of so many things unfavourable and discouraging to one who, like her, could look before and behind, she still believed that Jesus would fulfil all the hopes he had raised. It was not surprising that the multitudes, who, for the most part, looked no further than the miracles, which were now performed in greater numbers and splendour than ever, cleaved to him; and looking rather at what they desired than at what it was reasonable for them to expect, trusted still against all adverse signs that it was he who should redeem Israel. For them it was enough that Jesus continued to give proofs so astonishing that God was with him; while such power and favour were his, all seemed to be within his reach, and they doubted not, in one way or another, sooner or later, they would succeed in their endeavours to place him where they desired him. They could not oppose to his miracles the true nature and tendencies of his doctrine, and the spirit of his character and life, which made it so plain to me that whatever else he might be, he never would show himself to be the Christ for whom we look. No two things, differing from each other ever so much, seemed to me so con-

trary the one to the other as Jesus and the Christ. To Judith, however, these things did not present themselves so strongly; but as her letter shows, she persuaded herself that in some manner, not by any one to be foreseen or described, he would continue to manifest himself the teacher and prophet whom she could love, and by whose labours and instructions the hearts of the people were to be changed, and in due time, when the preparation was complete, stand forth before Israel and the world as the Messiah also.

I now determined within myself, that so soon as the severity of the winter should be past, I would again return to Judea, and at Beth-Harem await what should be the issue of the wonderful events still taking place. It seemed, from many things in the letters which I continued to receive, that by the people it was believed that somewhat that should be decisive in regard to Jesus would happen at the time of the Passover. It was indeed rumoured that Jesus had himself made such a declaration to his disciples, and that they also were looking forward to that feast as to the hour that would crown their hopes with their long delayed fulfilment. Many things, therefore, conspired to determine me to turn towards the east at that time. But while I waited for the season to arrive when it would be proper to take my departure, I heard from Onias concerning John what I was by no means surprised to hear, regarding it as hardly any other issue than what was natural and to be looked for. He thus wrote:—"Although we look to see you at the Passover, yet do I not intermit the intelligence it is our wont to impart; especially do I not delay to inform you of what has taken place at Machærus concerning John, and which hath ended in his destruction by Herod.

I well know that at one time you, as well as myself, opposed the purposes of the tetrarch when they aimed at the life and even the injury of John; in our judgment he was then in many ways doing more for than

against his cause. I know not in what opinion your mind now rests, though I can well suppose that, having separated yourself from the affairs of Herod—again I trust to be joined to them—you stand ready to condemn whatever measures he may have adopted to secure the ends at which he still aims. For myself, I am free to declare, that I think no longer as then, but that I now deem it right that so powerful an enemy as John, of what we believe to be the cause of Judea, should be cut off. If that at which Herod aims be, as I truly think it to be, the cause of God and Judea, then must those steps be justified in the sight of God and the law which are needful in order to arrive at the end, else we were like those who, desiring to run a race, have first bound or cut off their feet. No advance could be made in the favour of the people while John was abroad, and though, doubtless, his continual confinement in Machærus might in some sort have served the same purpose, yet while he lived, they who hoped in him once would still hope, and chance might have sent him once more his freedom, or Herod himself might have relented and bestowed it upon him. Wherefore it is better that he is dead, the rather as it was brought about more by others than by Herod himself, so that if the people shall be disposed to a harsh judgment, it must light upon other shoulders than his.

For it fell out in this wise. In the same Egyptian hall, where, when we were at Machærus, Herod feasted his adherents, did he, so soon as Herodias reached that place, give a banquet in celebration of his birthday to all whom he could bring there from every part of the land. His chief officers of government, the great captains of his armies, and all, who, by their presence, would show that they were on his side, failed not to be there. I also was present. The splendours of the scene when thou wast there seem, as I think of them, but as shadows and darkness compared with those which now blazed all over

Machærus. But the difference within the palace were well explained by only saying, that now there were present, arrayed in all the magnificence of the east, Herodias and her daughter, whose beauty, of both the mother and the child, changed into dimness all the shining of lamp and jewelry, and far more than they, dazzled the senses of whosoever beheld them. There was now, when at the banquet, no silence and gloom as before, but the joyful confusion of a thousand voices, of those who seemed contending with each other which should express most loyalty towards the royal pair by shout and song and the frequent pledging of the wine cup.

Thus it continued until towards the middle of the feast, and every known pleasure had been enjoyed to the full, and little more could be looked for but such as should be a repetition of what had gone before, when behold! as if to render the present banquet distinguished before all others, there suddenly entered the hall, preceded by a train of damsels, the daughter of Herodias, who, first approaching the throne of the astonished king, and craving his permission, then ascended what had been previously prepared for the display, and there performed, with a grace and power never seen in the dancing girls of this or any other region, the most difficult dances of Egypt, of Greece, and the farther east—what they are thou well knowest—filling all who beheld her with wonder, and most with delight, and who, as she paused now and then and the music ceased, rent the air with their shouts of applause. When this had been prolonged until, as it seemed to me, the dances of all nations had been performed, her maidens often joining her, or relieving her, and Herod seemed beside himself with joy, being moreover well in his cups, as were also the others who were seated with him, he called out to her to draw nigh to him, and not knowing how else to declare his pleasure, cried out that no reward could be so great as she deserved, but promised her what-

soever she should ask of him, though it were a half of his kingdom—confirming what he said by oaths. The young girl upon that, with a modesty that won applause from all, even as her dancing had done, said, that having done nothing to deserve the least reward, she could not ask what should diminish the possessions of the king, either by the half of its value or the smallest portion thereof; she therefore requested only what was of no value to Herod, the life, namely, of a violent and wicked man, already forfeit to the state, the fierce and constant enemy of her mother, and not less, as all Israel knew, of Herod himself, and who was now a prisoner in Machærus—the life of John the Baptist. No sooner was this heard than loud cries of approbation arose from the tables, mingled with laughter, and expressions of extreme astonishment also at the nature of the demand, when, from the promise and the oath of the king, there was plainly no limit to what she might not with reason have exacted, and the king have been bound to bestow. Herod, though plainly troubled that she had asked nothing which it would have agreed better with his magnificence to give, and expressing some sorrow that the life of John had been required, was not yet at liberty to take back what he had promised, so he at once gave the sign to his attendants, who quickly went and returned, bringing with them the head of the prophet, as some will continue to call him, which, being delivered to Salome and her train of maidens, they departed, bearing it, with many noisy signs of satisfaction, to Herodias, who, by her examination of it, was satisfied that it was indeed the head of her enemy.

Thus perished John, who, in my present judgment, should have perished long before. And thus may all others perish who thrust themselves in between Israel and the accomplishment of her great designs! Doubtless, Julian, Jesus will fall in like manner. Already many times has his life been sought, and that too by Herod, so that many places have become dange-

rous to him, and he hath taken refuge now in the dominions of Philip, and now in the desert places beyond Jordan. But as he changeth not his manner of speech, but still cries out against the chief men of the nation, still claims to be the Christ, while he prophesieth against Israel and for the Gentile, the same passions rage against him, and will rage until they gain their end. It is not his power to work miracles, nor the mad worship of the rabble that will save him; unless, indeed, performing such wonders in behalf of others, he, when the occasion comes, shall perform somewhat as surprising for himself, and transport himself beyond the reach of his pursuers. But thus much at least may be said for this strange person, that, while he is lavish of his bounties upon others, even the most wretched outcasts, he provides nothing for himself, nor derives the least advantage from a power that would seem capable to furnish him not only with all the necessities but the luxuries of life. Neither doth he seem to be guilty of any vice; for in this, diligent inquiry hath been made, and many spies employed, that if such things were true, evidence might be had thereof, and witnesses found to accuse him. No earthly power, as I judge, can help him, unless he depart from his present customs, or put forth his arm of God, and save himself.

Fail us not, Julian, at the Passover, when we shall surely look to see thee, and converse of many things, concerning which, with all our diligence, it is not possible to write. I shall still hope to see thee again joined to the cause of the only one who hath power to save us."

This was the letter of Onias concerning John. I was not surprised at his fate; I rather wondered that Herod had refrained from his life so long, when there existed so many causes of anger, so many reasons why he must desire his destruction. And I did not believe what Onias seemed to set forth, as if believed by him, that it was with any regret that the king

consented to the death of John, and gave the orders for his execution. Had he not rather rejoiced in an opportunity for his destruction, which presented others before the world as the immediate authors of his death, and so shielded himself, he might easily have recalled an engagement made in haste, in his cups moreover, from which the world would readily, as he must have known, have held him excused, especially as the breaking of his word in one direction would have been accompanied by an act of magnificence towards Salome, that would have been more than keeping it in another. In words he would have broken it, while in its spirit he would have more than kept it. This was so plain to me, that no conviction could be stronger than that Herod rejoiced in the happy chance that rid him, so easily to himself, of an old and dangerous foe.

Being now determined to revisit Judea, and to be present at the Passover in Jerusalem, I waited with impatience for the passing away of the winter months; and the more, as the means of transmitting letters by reason of the violence of the season were greatly diminished. I rarely heard of what took place in Judea after the letter of Onias just given, which came not long after the feast of Dedication. And if it was so with me, how was it to those of my countrymen in Rome—who were not bound by the living ties which connected me with the holy land—and how was it with the proper Roman population of this vast capital? What knew they, what could they know, of what was doing in Galilee, on the Jordan, at Machærus, in Beth-Harem? Not a sound reached their ear; and though Jesus was there doing the greatest works of his life, the rumour of them was scarcely heard by these multitudes so remote, but what is much more, so engaged by the affairs of a vast empire and a tumultuous capital.

Spring at length approached, the Tiber opened his gates of ice, the imprisoned and impatient coursers of

the sea broke loose from their bondage and set on their way towards all the ports of the known earth, bearing with them the luxuries of Roman art or her gold, to bring back in return the vegetable products or the rude manufacture of the half-civilised nations of Asia and Africa. It was on board a trader, bound to Cæsarea, that I embarked, and after a quick and fortunate voyage, found myself once more entering the arms of her colossal port. No sooner had I left the ship with my effects, than I departed for Beth-Harem; and, that I might renew former pleasures, travelled the same winding road as before; again stopped to be refreshed at the cottage among the hills near Samaria, and again slept at the inn of the complaisant Jael.

Of all that it now remains for me to say concerning the days passed in Judea, the record will be found in fragments of letters written, after my arrival at Beth-Harem, to Naomi in Rome.

LETTER XX.

I CANNOT easily tell you, my mother, with what pleasure I found myself again beneath the roofs of Beth-Harem; again seated where I was wont to sit and write to thee—overlooking the vineyards of Onias, the Jordan, and the distant hills; or else walking on the banks of the river with Judith, my old companion; or sitting on the housetop at the evening hour, between her and Onias, conversing of the times and the prospects opening or closing before us. I find that my true home is now, and must henceforth be, in Judea. I can never again dwell in Rome. And I doubt not, my mother, that when the aspect of affairs here shall become more settled, and it shall be determined concerning Jesus and Herod, whether either of them or neither shall reign in Israel, you will stand ready, as indeed your promises have assured me you will, to

leave Rome behind, and pass the decline of life here in the land of our fathers; and, we will hope, under the reign of some native prince, if not beneath the rule of Messiah himself.

But of this I will speak hereafter. I am now to tell you of whatever takes place here in Beth-Harem concerning our household, or in Judea concerning Jesus. I find Judith occupied only by one thought, that of Jesus, and the probable events of the Passover. Though she will not admit that she doubts whether Jesus will confirm her hopes by assuming his proper rank at the feast, yet is it evident that her fears or apprehensions outweigh and outrun her hopes, for her countenance is ever anxious; and when her thought or her conversation dwells more especially on these themes, its expression is melancholy and sad. I asked her of the progress he had made since the last letters I had received, and whether more or fewer miracles than before had been performed.

"Julian," she answered, "had God himself walked among us in bodily shape, and powers of healing had flowed out from the glance of his eye, or the air in which he moved, or the touch of his garments, the effects that had followed would not have been more astonishing than the new wonders that have been wrought by Jesus, either in respect to their number or their greatness. Wherever he hath moved have miracles been witnessed, such as have filled all with amazement, and from all have drawn the same exclamation, 'Who shall this be but the Christ?'"

"And you, also, have followed him," I said.

"Not constantly," she replied, "as have some; as now do Mary of Magdala, and Joanna, the wife of Chusa."

"She is then a disciple at last," I exclaimed.

"No one more devoted and sincere," replied Judith. "It was long before the late feast, that, withdrawing from the service of Herod, with whom—then at length the open enemy and persecutor of Jesus,

plotting even against his life—she would no longer remain, she obeyed the desires of her heart, and joined the number of those who followed Jesus, hearing him whenever she could, and whenever he tarried long in any one city, resorting thither, her husband with her, but not as yet, like her, a believer. For myself,” continued Judith, “I went not far from Beth-Harem; but when Jesus drew nigh, in the lower parts of Galilee, and especially while he sojourned here on the Jordan, and in the nearer regions of Peræa, thou wilt not doubt that I was then with him, Ruth being ever my companion.”

“And after seeing and hearing for thyself, Judith, how stands thy faith?”

“In the very strength of God!” she replied.

“And with no accompanying doubt?”

“With none,” she answered. “Whether,” she added, after a pause, “it be reasonable so to believe and trust, I know not; but so it is, after what I have beheld of the powers of Jesus, and have heard of his doctrine, I believe in him perforce, even as I believe in God. The works of God, the heavens with their hosts declare him their maker and supporter; and so also the works of Jesus declare him to be of God, clothed with so much of a divine power as is needful to do such things. And when such an one proclaims himself, whether plainly or obscurely, to be the Christ, shall not his declaration be received? I know not how to refuse it. Would it not be to say that God can speak falsely?”

“It would, indeed,” I answered. “Yet many of his most constant followers take offence at his speech, and forsake him, or are in doubt.”

“I see not what they would have,” Judith replied. “He, indeed, now speaks of his death as about to happen—many think at the approaching feast; but then he declares, at the same time, that death shall not injure him, for he can resist its power. And who can doubt that when he has raised others from

the dead, and lately Lazarus of Bethany, who had been long buried, he can protect himself from the effects of whatever might be inflicted upon him, or by virtues previously infused into his body, return to life after life had been taken away. Why he should permit himself to be slain, I indeed cannot tell, unless it be by restoring life again to himself still further to increase the confidence of others in his power, and that he may then, having so returned, restore at length the kingdom to Israel."

"Ah, Judith, I perceive that thy faith stands indeed in a divine strength ; at least in a strength that is furnished not from any of the resources of human reason. I must confess that, for myself, though to the present moment I had believed with thee, the death of Jesus would convince me at length of my delusion. And I may safely promise, therefore, that if, being destroyed by the priests or the Romans, he should overcome the power of death, and, as thou thinkest, return to life, and then enter into his kingdom, I will myself believe in him, take him as the Christ, and wear the yoke of his allegiance."

"I shall not doubt then," said Judith, "to see thee both a disciple and a subject."

It was with no little eagerness that, soon after my arrival, I sought the home of Ruth and her father—he now in possession again of his limbs and his sight. By the aid of Onias, and of ancient friends in Beth-Harem, he has become a husbandman on the banks of the Jordan. There I found him, and Ruth also—now the mistress of a well-stored and comfortable dwelling, and the happiest and brightest spirit of these regions. They were truly glad to behold again one, who, by a kind fortune, both as regards them and himself, had first helped to lift them up out of their low estate. But every feeling towards me was lost in one of gratitude and love for Jesus, to whom they owe so much more. It is their delight to speak of him, and they would gladly have followed him, had he encouraged

them to do so. They now look forward with great expectations to the time, which they doubt not will come, when he shall stand revealed before the people. Their joy would be double, could they behold him seated where they think it his right to sit, and raised above any apprehension from those who are thirsting for his life. The approaching Passover is expected by them with impatience, as they intend to go up to Jerusalem, and trust then to see Jesus again, and are fully persuaded that at that time he will declare himself, and appear what he really is. The rumours of his death, both as predicted by himself or threatened by the Pharisees and rulers, they will not credit. As for the purpose on the part of the rulers to destroy him by accusing him before Pilate, they say that it is but the same report that has been renewed from time to time, during the whole year that Jesus has taught; and as for any prediction of such an event by himself, they judge it too little probable to deserve any credit. It is to them unlikely in proportion to their persuasion that Jesus is Christ, and in that they are immovably fixed. More grateful, hoping, and believing followers, Jesus has not in all the compass of Judea than Levi and Ruth.

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The ruler Shammai has been with us to-day. Upon inquiring for Zadok, he replied that he was already gone up to Jerusalem.

"Why so early?" Judith inquired.

"Can you ask, daughter?" said Shammai.

"I need not have asked, certainly," replied Judith, sighing; "the same cruel zeal that has carried him so many times over Judea and Galilee, doubtless has now carried him to Jerusalem. May Jehovah confound all his counsels, and bring them to nought!"

"He will not rest," said the ruler, "until he has accomplished his aim. He can scarcely fail, what with his own craft and the power of those with whom he is in league."

"And his aim," I said, "is the accusation and destruction of Jesus, I suppose."

"Yes," said Shammai, "nothing less. John being disposed of, the adherents of Herod look upon Jesus as the only remaining obstacle in their way."

"But," said I, "are not the people clearly with Jesus? When, as before the feast of Tabernacles, I mingled much with them, I found them for the most part of his side; and, as I learn, the numbers of his followers and friends have greatly increased of late, many even among the rich and in high station looking upon him with favour, and secretly favouring him, if not openly confessing him."

"That is true," said the ruler; "the people worship him, and show their homage by crowding about him, hearing him preach, and looking on upon his miracles. But they are a loose, tumultuous, and changing body, without leaders and without power, notwithstanding their numbers. It will be easy for Zadok, and a few like himself, to manage them; nay, by a little skill, to make it appear that the people themselves require his destruction. There is a body of men in Jerusalem, priests, rulers, Pharisees, and Scribes, to whom, when united for some common object, the destruction of a friendless solitary individual like Jesus will be but as the crushing of an insect."

"Say not so, Shammai," said Judith. "I will not believe that there are in all Jerusalem—bold and wicked as those white-washed priests are—men to be found who will dare to assail, with ill intent, a man like Jesus, so evidently even in their own eyes full of the very power of God. They will fear lest their hands fall blasted at the very touch of him, and the curse of the Almighty cleave to and pursue them."

"Judith, Judith," cried Onias, "thou knowest not what thou sayest. If the law is what we have taken it to be, even the law of God, then doth Jesus well deserve to die! For what precept is there he hath not

perverted, or what holy day he hath not violated? When, seeing what his powers are, we looked to behold him its friend and protector, what doth he but bring it into contempt more and more, breaking its commands himself, and teaching others so? Be not so carried away, my daughter, by insane hopes, as to despise the word of God—which so many years has been the boast and glory of his people, and raised them to a place above all the nations of the earth, whom God has been pleased to leave in their idolatry—and in its room thrust the new doctrines of this young man of yesterday; for which, if he offer the proof of his miracles, they must be the product of devils, seeing that God cannot overthrow his own work."

Said Shammai, "Not only will he be charged with breaking the law, and with blasphemy for making himself the Son of God, but with treasonable designs against the Roman power, in that he would set up a new kingdom here in Judea."

"That which they who accuse him charge him with, themselves would do," cried Judith.

"So it must be said," replied Shammai.

"Beware, my child, what thou sayest," said Onias. "As sure as it shall be that Jesus is at the feast, so sure will it be that he will fall before the united power of Herod and the Pharisees; and who can say that, with him, his followers may not also fall? If Pilate shall be made to believe that Jesus has aimed at dominion, it will be easy to turn his jealous mind against others also. And who more than Zadok hath knowledge of the faith of every soul in Israel?"

"I fear not Zadok, my father," replied Judith, "nor the attempts of any leagued with him, either in Jerusalem or elsewhere. What I am sure of is this, that the people are with Jesus from end to end of Israel, not doubting that now, at the Passover, or soon, their hopes will be fulfilled. A few in Jeru-

saalem of priests and Herodians may raise tumults, and by sudden violence, by injustice and deceit, attempt the life of Jesus and of his disciples, but never can they succeed. The people would not abandon in his extremity one whom they have seen and listened to so long as a prophet of God."

"My child," said Shammai, "I fear thou deceivest thyself. I too could wish that Jesus might escape the snares that are on every side set for him by the Sadducees, as well as by the Pharisees and Herodians; but, as I judge, he cannot or will not. Were he now to listen to the advice of many, even as I learn of some of his disciples themselves, who warn him against going up to Jerusalem—as they say only to die, and they with him—he might doubtless retreat into Peræa, or upper Galilee, or Arabia, where Aretas, who already hath had communication with him, would give him protection; or into Parthia, where Artabanus would serve him doubtless the same good turn. But, Judith, if he presses on to Jerusalem, think not that the people can save him, if it be that the rulers should assail him; for just as they shall perceive the schemes of his enemies succeeding against him, and that he falls more and more into their hands, will their faith in him grow faint and die away. His weakness at such a moment will prove him not to be he for whom they had taken him. 'How,' they will say, 'could the wicked triumph against the Lord's Anointed! If he is the Christ, he will save himself; our help cannot be needed; and if he save not himself, nor fall upon his enemies to their utter destruction, then may we know he is not the Christ, and that we have been deceived.' They will therefore stand still, and await the issue."

"The words of Shammai, Judith," said Onias, "cannot be gainsaid. That such will be the conduct of the people, there can be no doubt in any one who will mix with them, and hear their language. They will not, nor in truth could they, rise in defence of

one who hath ever taught them the love of peace, to bear wrong rather than resist it—in no case to return evil for evil ; and all Israel knows such to be the maxims this strange man hath preached. They will hope to see him blaze forth in the resistless power of one whom they believe God to be with, and so vindicate his claims to the throne of Israel. But that will be his work, not theirs.”

“ Do you also think the same, Julian ? ” said Judith, turning to me.

“ I can think no otherwise,” I answered.

Judith sat for a moment buried in thought, when she lifted her head and said, “ I believe you are right ; it must be so. If Jesus fall before his enemies, he is not our deliverer ; if he triumph over them by the same power we have seen him use against disease and death itself, then in that shall we be furnished with the sign of his greatness, not to be mistaken, for which we have asked and waited so long. But no more do I doubt that such sign shall be given, than that his birth was announced by angels, that the voice of God was heard at his baptism, that Lazarus and the widow’s son returned from death at his word, that the heavens are above me and the earth beneath me. God has been with him thus far—or else all is false, everything a dream—and he will not forsake him now, or ever. He has defended him against the Nazarenes, and against Herod, and against the furious rabble, who many a time have set upon him to stone him ; and when his need shall be greatest, and those who hate him shall be gathered together in one place, it will not be then for the first time that his own power, or the power of God, shall fail him. In some way, it may be in a way we now think not of, God will appear and show him to be his Son—Redeemer and King. For myself, I shall go up to Jerusalem to this feast as one who goeth to a marriage, with songs and dancing.”

Said Shammai, "It may be so, who can tell? Time will show."

"All is so strange concerning him," I said, "that it cannot be denied to be possible. That God hath been his strength hitherto, I find it difficult not to believe: he hath surely enabled him to do wonderful things, and hath saved him out of threatening dangers. Who shall say there is no good ground of hope, that if darker dangers should encompass him in Jerusalem, a power of God shall be put forth for his deliverance greater than ever? Nay, there is force in what Judith says, that it were strange indeed should it not be so. But, whatever power may be put forth, and whatever deliverance be wrought out, who can believe that such an one as Jesus shall be shown to be Messiah? It is not, surely, the possession of power alone that shall make Jesus or any other to be the Christ, but a certain kind and fitness of character which Jesus hath not, and which seems not possible to belong to him."

"The young man says what is doubtless true and just," said Onias, "and so the event will show. Why do so many in Israel reject and deny Jesus as the Christ, but because they see not in him the lineaments of the Christ? Why are Chorazin and Bethsaida, and now Capernaum, unbelieving, yea and Nazareth also, but because in Jesus, notwithstanding the wonders of his hand, howsoever wrought, they see not the son of David! Many—and who shall wholly deny them reason?—give his works to the prince of devils! To them do I now incline; for, if they were of God, he who works them could not, as Jesus doth, deceive the people or violate the law. But they of the Jews are to be counted by multitudes, who, though they see God in the miracles of Jesus, do not behold the Christ in him; nor will they look upon it as a possible thing that he should ever be found in him. Israel will not be at peace until Jesus shall be as John! And what would happen most happily for the people would be, that at the feast, Jesus should

by the council be accused, and suffer at the hands of Pilate the just punishment of his deeds."

Judith said no more, but Ruth coming in at the moment, she arose and with her withdrew, grieved for the words of her father, into the garden.

"Were all in Judea," said Onias, "like Judith, the triumph of Jesus were a sure and an easy one. Her whole speech by day, and her dreams by night, are of him; and it is what she has heard of his teaching, even more than what she has seen of his works, that has so won her heart. Not a disciple that follows his steps has a faith like hers. And the faith of few has been so assailed as hers hath been, what with Zadok and Onias. Would it were placed on somewhat more worthy! He who hath thus thrown Israel into confusion, trampled on the law, insulted the priesthood, and will die as the fool dieth, little deserves it. Verily, but for him the true Messiah were long ere this sitting on the throne of Israel."

There no longer seems any doubt that the destruction of Jesus is resolved upon by the council, and that most of the chief men and rulers look on with approval, or openly aid them in the measures they pursue. The works of Jesus of late, which have been so wonderful and astonishing, have filled them with new rage, and wholly blinded them to the truth that, though Jesus is not, or will not be the Christ, he may still be a prophet and messenger of God. As he disappoints them in one thing, they have hardened themselves against all his claims, ascribe his power to Satan, and are bent only on his ruin. He who has exposed them before the people, and laid bare their hollowness and hypocrisies, though he may do the works of angels, they will not forgive, but will have their revenge. And the great thing which he hath so lately done at Bethany, the fame of which has filled the land and brought many to believe in him, has seemed but to inflame their rage to a higher pitch of madness. That they, rather than Jesus, may possibly be blas-

phemers and rebels against the authority of God, never enters their mind. But their persecutions of Jesus and his followers will surely serve but to endear them the more to the people, on whom they have conferred so many benefits. Were it not for the industry with which the Scribes and rulers sow the seeds of doubt and distrust in the minds of the multitude, all would, methinks, believe in Jesus, through veneration of his virtues—through simple love of him as a gentle and beneficent friend. Each one with whom you may converse has something to tell of what he has done to himself or some kinsman or neighbour—of some instruction he has imparted, or some miracle of mercy he has wrought. They say that both for his goodness and his powers they doubt not that he partakes of the spirit of God, even as the prophets of old; and these things also so far make for him that he is the Christ. They would rather, therefore, that he were left alone untouched, unimpeded by the rulers, to finish his ministry, whatever it may be; and perhaps other signs, in process of days or weeks, and such as we look for, will be given. A general persuasion has gone abroad that at the present Pass-over such signs will at length be given, and all their hopes be fulfilled, in consequence of which multitudes far greater than usual are going up to the feast. But while the populace are thus justly disposed, they are, at the same time, weak, timid, and distrustful; they will do no more than stand by at rest, ready to receive Jesus if he shall commit himself to them, but not ready nor able, as their temper now is, to do aught to deliver him from the hands of the priests if they should finally determine to assail him. According to the saying of Shammai, they will leave him to his own strength, trusting to behold, in the manner in which he shall use it, tokens of his authority, and signs of his great office.

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The day had now arrived when we were to set

forth on our way to Jerusalem. We were bound to the dwelling of Heber, a kinsman of the mother of Judith, standing without the city, just where the Mount of Olives falls into the plain, and opposite the fount of Siloam. But seeing that at this feast the houses of those who inhabit the city, or its near neighbourhood, are hardly able to hold the numbers of such as pour in from all parts of the land, we took with us, by the providence of Onias, loaded upon a camel, the materials of a tent, which, if the necessity arose, would serve as a protection against the heat of the day season, and by night furnish a cooler and more agreeable retreat than the closer apartments of a dwelling.

The heavens smiled upon us with a gentle air and a temperate heat as we took our departure from the house of Onias. Two days must be devoted to the journey, as Judith and Ruth, seated upon slow-paced mules, made a part of our company, and our motion would therefore be slow ; and for their more especial companion, and seated on the same wretched kind of beast, Shammai ; Ziba, with others of the servants of Onias, conducting the camels, heavy-loaded with our tent and other effects. Onias, Levi, and myself, mounted upon fleeter animals, were able to make more rapid progress, so that often, while the ruler and his two maidens crept lazily along, we turned aside into any path that appeared more inviting, or visited spots not far from our course noted in the history of our people.

The roads were already beginning to fill with those who, like ourselves, were seeking Jerusalem ; some from the regions of Upper Galilee, from Decapolis, and the parts still farther east, and some even from Damascus and the banks of the Euphrates, who, that they may at the same time perform a religious duty, and visit kinsmen or friends from whom they have separated for the advantages of a foreign residence, turn annually towards the great capital at this season

of the year. With these distant travellers we often entered into conversation, giving and receiving intelligence concerning the condition of our people in all parts of the world. The great inquiry on their part was of Jesus, and whether he would probably be at the feast, and what would happen if he should be there. Having only heard reports of him until now, their only desire seemed to be to see him, and their only apprehension lest he should not be present. Family and friends, and the observance of the festival, were forgotten in the thoughts, the hopes, and the fears, that possessed them concerning this wonderful man. They seemed, for the most part, in a state of great uncertainty, not knowing what to think of him, nor hardly what to wish for or expect. Many indeed were violent enough, and desired only that so great a disturber of the public peace, and who was likely to bring down upon the whole people the wrath of Rome, thereby destroying the traffic of every sort now prosperously going on, might be summarily dealt with, and that too ere the mischief grew to any more serious head. Others thought that any teaching and any teacher was to be welcomed even, that could redeem the law of Moses from the practices and the perversions of the reigning sects who had made it—one set of them—little better than a religion without God, or spirit, or a future ; and another, a cover, by means of numerous dead forms, of every wicked vice and lust.

We might be grateful, they thought, towards any one who should bring back a true worship, no matter for the way he took to reach his end. But there were none from the remoter parts who deemed Jesus to be the Messiah, or thought that he, any more than John, was fitted for that great office. I enjoyed in the highest degree these passing glimpses of men of all forms of Jewish faith, and obtained much knowledge of the character of communities of our people, of which before I had heard little, and knew hardly of their existence.

Shammai, as I have said, was the more especial guardian of Ruth and Judith; but it many times happened that, tempting him forward into the company of Onias and Levi, and engaging him in some dispute, I then fell back and took upon myself the more agreeable duties of his office. So full of pleasures of the highest kind, my mother, were these two days, that were I to describe them, the hours must be treated as days and the moments as hours.

Upon leaving the house of Onias, we crossed the Jordan at the Ox Ford, and keeping upon the west bank of the river, took the road to Jericho. Avoiding the city, we struck directly for the barren wastes and rocky defiles which conduct the traveller to Jerusalem.

You will readily believe it was with no common emotion that I found myself drawing near for the first time to so celebrated a place. The sentiments which possessed me when I first beheld, from the ocean, the outlines of Lebanon, and first set my foot upon the soil of Cæsarea, were again present. As I ascended the eastern side of the Mount of Olives, passing through Bethany, and knew that upon reaching its summit, or coming to its descent, the long expected prospect would break upon me, I could with difficulty restrain my pace to that of Judith's mule, whose step seemed slower than ever before. But the hill was in due time surmounted, and soon as we had crossed a part of its summit, and passed from out the groves which clothe its western brow, the city, as it were in a moment of time, stood before us in its whole extent, no object whatsoever intervening to cut off the least portion of the prospect. Mount Moriah, crowned with its temple, rising from the vast supporting walls that form a part of the hill on which it stands, Mount Sion with its shining palaces, Acra and Bezetha, the heavy walls of the city girding it about, with their gateways and frequent towers—all lay before me, a vision of greatness and beauty not surpassed by any other I had ever beheld. The vast assemblage of

temple, palace, and dwelling, with the swarming populace, and the thousand signs of overflowing and active life, struck the mind the more impressively too from standing, as it all did, in the midst of surrounding hills, whose bare and rugged tops and sides gave no token of aught but sterility and death. The eye beheld nothing upon them but flocks of sheep among the gray rocks, hardly to be distinguished from the rocks themselves, and so only adding one more to the other features of desolation. Another scene was, however, presented by fertile valleys at their feet, thickly inhabited; their olive orchards and their vineyards creeping a little way up the barren hillsides. At the roots of the hill we were upon, and all along upon the banks of the Kedron, the white pointed tents of strangers and travellers were visible, who had, like ourselves, come thus early to witness the events that should ensue, while the roads leading to the gates of the city, and crossing the plain in all directions, were filled with crowds of those who, on horse and on foot, or in vehicles of every various kind, were arriving or departing. Clouds of dust, converted by the rays of the setting sun to a gaudy purple hue, rose and hovered over the whole scene, through which glittered the shining points of polished harness, or the steel trappings of troops of Roman horse as they shot swiftly along. We stopped and gazed ere we descended the hill, that we might enjoy awhile the beauty and magnificence that were spread out below. To Judith and the others it was an old and familiar sight; but they looked forth upon it, and paused while they looked, not less willingly than I. But Onias soon warned us of the waning day, and that all the remaining time might be needed to make our preparations for the night. We therefore, at a quick rate, descended the mount, and moved towards the dwelling of Heber, where we were welcomed with patriarchal hospitality by the venerable Israelite.

That having occurred against which Onias had made good provision, our tents were soon set up on

the grounds of Heber, where they overlooked both the city and the road descending from the Mount of Olives.

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The day succeeding this being the Sabbath, I resorted early to the city in company with Onias. I was filled with admiration as I drew nearer to the walls and saw their immense height and thickness, and the strength of the gates, with the defences of their vast towers, and considered that, owing to these things and to its natural position, it was a place absolutely impregnable. On this side, indeed, the city derives great advantage from the height of the ground on which it stands, in addition to that of the walls. But were there the walls alone, it seemed to me an impossible thing that they should either be surmounted by an enemy, or demolished by engines. Onias, with a proud step, as he beheld my wonder, led me on to the gates, and through them into the city, pointing out as he went the buildings that were most remarkable, and the persons also whom we met, who were distinguished for their office or their power over the people. At length, hastening along the streets now thronged with those who were pouring also in the same direction, we reached the great object of my desire, that which from my infancy I had ever wished to behold—the temple. Truly did Herod show his magnificence in this vast and beautiful structure. If, in other cities, as I have seen, he did great things and well worthy of admiration, here he did greater still; so that, as I judge, all that together he had built in Cæsarea would not compare with what, for grandeur, perfect workmanship, proportion, and variety of beauty, he accomplished in Jerusalem in this single building. The marble of which it is built is beautiful and polished to the smoothness of crystal, yet are the separate pieces so large that it is surprising they should have been laid in their places safely and without injury at such heights. The innumerable columns surrounding the courts of the Gentiles and the women,

and supporting the porticos which encompass the building, create unfeigned astonishment in the beholder.

All parts of it, on the morning of this Sabbath, I found swarming with the numbers of those who had come up, some to worship, some, like myself, strangers from remote parts, to wonder and gaze, and some to converse and learn the news of those who had recently arrived. The name of Jesus was heard from every one as he passed talking with another, or as he addressed yourself. All were asking some question concerning him of those who, they supposed, might know better than themselves, or else answering those who had made inquiries, or else loudly and fiercely disputing concerning his character, authority, and works, and the designs of the council. In the outer courts, where the meaner sort of people assemble, no measures were kept among those who disputed, but words often came to blows, and peace was restored only by the interference of the officers of the temple.

The question put by all to all was, "Will he come up to the feast?—who can tell?" As I stood upon the upper steps of those leading to the treasury, I was accosted by one, who said, "Sir, can you tell me if Jesus will be at the feast?" I answered that I could not, but I trusted much to the general persuasion that he would come. Though none can say that he will from any certain knowledge, yet all feel assured that he will, and there are none to say nay. Such general convictions commonly turn out well founded.

"What you say," he replied, "is true. Seeing you, however, but now in company with Onias of Beth-Harem, I looked for more certain intelligence at your hands, as Jesus has of late been in those regions."

"He has moved so fast," I replied, "from place to place, as if hasting to complete some work that he had to do in season, that it is likely none can tell where he has been, or where he now is, save those disciples who, as I hear, never leave him."

"Some others know a little." cried a voice at my

side, "as well as those of whom you speak. Two days ago he was in Peræa, beyond Jordan—to be in the outskirts of Jericho on the Sabbath, where I doubt not he now is. And, what is more, he will be in Jerusalem at the feast." So saying, he turned away, and passing from place to place, repeated his news to as many as would hear. "This is news, indeed," said he who had first spoken. "It will crowd the city more and more. What think you will happen?"

I said that I was a stranger in Jerusalem, and would rather learn of him.

"I am in no man's secrets," he answered, "and can tell you only what is confidently reported, and my own opinion."

"And what will happen as you think, or as is commonly believed?"

"What I think then is this, that Jesus will publicly, as it is well known he has done privately, declare himself, and the people will rise in his favour. It is all abroad among them already that he hath of late, not obscurely as heretofore, but plainly announced himself the Christ, which has greatly stirred them; and that, together with their own belief founded on his miracles, will draw them all around him."

"But," I asked, "has he not, at the same time that he has declared himself Christ, prophesied his death by the council?"

"That is said," he answered, "but is not believed. Besides, they say if he has uttered such a word, it can mean only that he shall die as Jesus the Nazarene, and then begin his reign and true life as the Christ. But so bent are they on having their way, that, whether he will or not, they will hail him and have him king."

"If he be not really such," I said, "it will bring down upon him a great danger, and possibly his ruin. They would be more cautious, perhaps, if they considered that. They surely would not desire to do him an injury."

"Certainly not; but the difficulty would be to put a new opinion into them. It cannot be done; what they want they will have and do. But while such is their purpose, the council are bent upon his death, and will compass it, if by force or fraud it can be done."

"They will find it, I think, a thing impossible to do, in the present temper of the populace."

"I am also clear," he replied, "that it would breed tumults not easy to be allayed. Yet they may accomplish that by craft and secretly which they could not do openly and in the eye of day. To give their accusations colour, as if they sprung not so much from themselves as from some of the followers of Jesus, who would fain do the state a service, it is rumoured that one of them is found who will inform against him, and accuse him before the council."

"That may be said," I answered, "but cannot be true; for no one thing is affirmed so constantly as this, the veneration and affection with which Jesus is regarded by those who are about him; so that one might as soon expect that Jesus should accuse himself, as that one of his disciples should."

"Trust not that," rejoined my companion; "gold will bribe any virtue—at least any to be found in Jerusalem. With that the council shall buy, mark now the issue, the bosom friend of this Nazarene, and the judgment of Pilate!"

"I had thought better," I said, "of my countrymen, if not of Pilate."

"It was because of your ignorance," he rejoined; and, wishing me peace, turned away.

What I had heard from this man, who seemed to know more, and with more certainty than he was willing to acknowledge, gave me pain. I forgot for a time where I was, and continued to pace the marble floors of the porticos, thinking only of the probable doom of this good man. I would willingly have moved in the cause of his deliverance, but I could see

no quarter whence it could come. All the men in power, the rulers of the synagogues, the high priests Annas and Caiaphas, the principal persons both among the Pharisees and Sadducees, were alike banded together against him—and for him, only the fickle, helpless, unmanageable people, well disposed, hoping everything, but only half believing their own opinion concerning him. I could only say, God surely has been with him thus far; he must have some great purpose in thus sending him forth, and will not allow that it shall be defeated; safely and confidently then may we leave him in his hands. The darkness is too profound for us to penetrate.

Turning away, I passed from the temple into the streets, and entering a synagogue, passed there the hour of worship. They who preached, failed not to turn away the minds of the people, by every form of statement and argument, from Jesus and his doctrines. The great considerations here in Jerusalem seemed to be, “that he was a disturber of the peace of the city and the nation, interrupted their business, caused uproar and confusion, gave umbrage to the Romans, brought the law and its ministers into contempt, and substituted dangerous novelties in the place of ancient truth; his miracles were shown to be the work of devils, and the citizens were exhorted to oppose him, and all who clave to him.” Most assented to such things, but some expressed their dissatisfaction aloud, and attempted to reply by showing the opinions of those who believed in Jesus, but the voices of too many were lifted up against them, and the service ended in noise and confusion.

Well wearied at length of the city, I sought our tent at the foot of the mount, where in the more quiet presence of Ruth, Judith, their parents, and the venerable Heber, I enjoyed a higher pleasure than before. It would have been higher still, but that so bitter is this benevolent old Jew's hostility against Jesus, that he will not permit his name to be mentioned in his presence; or if he converses of him

at all, it is with a force of passion that changes him for the time to a madman. We therefore abstained from all such topics until the evening, and the moon had risen, when we wandered forth to the fountain of Siloam, where, seated among its rocks and shades, we discoursed of the only things that now engaged us, of Jesus, and of his doctrine, as it is alleged to be, and indulged freely our conjectures of the events of the approaching feast.

As we sat there, and as we afterwards walked returning to the house of Heber, the sound of music came to us from neighbouring houses in all directions, in whose apartments, or in the grounds about them, there were companies of persons who sang hymns or songs, or danced to the playing of various instruments.

On the following day it became well known among the people that Jesus had arrived at Bethany, and that he would with certainty be in Jerusalem at the feast. A great stir was evident among all of every sect and rank, produced by this intelligence. Great numbers, immediately abandoning whatever might be the affairs in hand, left the city at once, and made for Bethany. All day the crowds filled the way, coming or going. Learning from some who returned that Jesus was indeed there at the house of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, but that on the morrow he would come to the city, I went not, though I restrained myself with difficulty, but waited till he should himself arrive. In the meantime I saw and conversed with many of the inhabitants of the city. I found them sure of one thing—that Jesus was now coming into the city as the son of David, that he would proclaim himself, and assume his proper place; they would go forth in great numbers to meet him, and receive him as it became them to do. They said that the council were already alarmed at the signs everywhere so apparent of devotion to Jesus, and knew not what measures to adopt to check the raging of the fever. It was evident that they were now apprehensive lest Jesus would prove what he had

often been affirmed to be, and they should lose their power.

I could urge nothing against their assertions or their expectations, neither did I wish to do so. It all seemed now likely enough to happen as they were so confidently predicting. Who at least can do otherwise than yield before the strong persuasions of an immense multitude? Whatever sentiment universally seizes and pervades them it is difficult to believe will not be realized. Such consent among so many, affects the mind, whether it will or not, with the force of truth.

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Another day has come and gone ; Jesus has entered the city ; I have seen him.

Early in the morning it became apparent that that would take place which had been looked for. For so soon as the gates were open, the people began to pour forth and throng the road leading by the house of Heber, and over the Mount of Olives to Bethany. As the day advanced, the crowds increased of persons of all sorts and conditions, the old as well as the young, the rich and poor, women and little children. It seemed as if the whole city had come abroad to honour by its presence and welcome, the entrance of one who was either to reign over it as king, or else it might be to fall a sacrifice to the rage of the present rulers. If one might judge by the countenance, but especially by the language which continually fell upon the ear, they who had thus come abroad had come in the spirit of friendship, and with the intention to show that if Jesus would meet them in their wishes, they on the other hand would acknowledge and receive him. As these crowds passed by our tent, loud and ardent in their talk, their lively gesticulations as well as their voices showing what hopes and passions were ruling within, it was in vain that I longer tried to resist the contagion, but leaving Judith and Ruth at the tent door, threw myself into the midst of the living mass, and

was borne along with it up the mount, and on towards Bethphage and Bethany. When we had reached the brow of the hill and were about to pass it, the sound of voices, as of a great number, caught our ears, and looking forward, we beheld where, as the road suddenly turned, Jesus, surrounded by another multitude, came on towards us. The air was now filled with the exulting cries of the approaching throng, which, caught up by us and those who were behind, rolled on an increasing shout even to the gates of the city, announcing to those who covered the walls and the towers that Jesus was drawing nigh. Never were a people, I believe, so carried away by what cannot be termed other than a sacred zeal. No language was too lofty and confident for them to utter, no acts of homage too expressive to render of their loyalty and devotion. The way was all along strewn with the leaves and branches of trees, which the eager populace tore from the groves that bordered the road; branches of the palm were waved over their heads, and ever as Jesus slowly moved on, often wholly obstructed by the struggling crowds, they who were immediately about him, cast their garments in the way as before a king. Many, especially such as had at any time received benefits of healing at his hands, or whose friends had been restored by his power, cast themselves down prostrate on the ground as the only sufficient sign they could offer of their reverence and gratitude. I cannot well describe my sensations as Jesus drew nigh, so that I could with distinctness observe his countenance and form, but they were such as I never before experienced in the presence of a mortal; and it could not well be otherwise, as I doubted not that I looked upon one within whom were lodged the very power and wisdom of Jehovah. Awe and dread were therefore the feelings that would have alone prevailed, were it not that, however wonderfully I felt he was united to God, I saw that the language of his countenance was not that of an angel, nor of a god, but of a man bound, like my-

self, by the closest ties to every one of the multitudes who thronged him. Its expression was mild and pitiful; but at the same time of one who, if full of regard and compassion for each and for all, also possessed the energies and the will to do for those whom he loved whatsoever should be needful for their advantage or redemption. Strength and power were lodged in the lines and forms of the face, not less than benevolence, giving ample assurance that there were inward forces of intellect and will equal to every work that might be given him to do. His was therefore the aspect of a person who—and this was what I had gathered also from the observation of Onias—was to be loved and yet feared also. He seemed buried in thought for the most part as he rode along, save that now and then he briefly responded to the cries or the questions of those who pressed about him. But he spake not many words, or so that more than a very few could hear, until we were come to the descent of the Mount of Olives, and the city suddenly came into view in all its glory—its walls, and towers, and housetops, covered with her thronging inhabitants. He then paused; and beholding with both astonishment and pity, as it seemed, the scene before him, tears fell from his eyes; and though I could not hear with distinctness all that he said, he appeared to express apprehensions of great evil and disaster as about to overtake Jerusalem and Judea, of enemies who should assail and oppress them, and lay them waste. All who heard were struck with amazement, and one to another uttered in secret tones their astonishment. Thus, while the innumerable multitude of those who encompassed him, and hailed him king and deliverer, and could find no words of joy in which to give vent to the hopes that were within, he rejoiced not, but was evidently sad. The sight of the city with its populace all awaiting him, and the sounds of their tumultuous cries as they were borne to us from afar, and the waving of their hands in token of welcome, seemed to awaken no

feeling of triumph in his heart, but, instead, drew forth tears. I confess that I was also astonished; and could only say, the whole of this man is mysterious and impenetrable—we know him not—we do not comprehend what he is, nor what he has come to do.

Thus we moved on—but hardly moving by reason of the constantly increasing throngs of people—to the sublime music of their acclamations, which, without ceasing, filled the air. As we came against the house of Heber, our humble tents I beheld swept away and trampled into the earth by the descending torrent, which, swelling beyond the limits of the road, spread far into the grounds on either side. No other end seemed to be regarded by those who composed these crowds than, if possible, to keep within sight of the object of their worship, or the hearing of his voice; and but that a divine providence seemed to protect the people, great numbers would have perished, trodden into the earth by those who rushed madly on, forgetful, in their struggles for precedence, of the feeble and the young who filled their way.

The day was already well declined when we reached the gates of the city, and when we had arrived at the temple, it had drawn on towards evening: when, therefore, after entering it, Jesus had again, as once before, purged it of those who, by their wicked practices, violated its sanctity, and the people had received assurance that he would come again on the morrow, he returned to Bethany, where, at the house of Lazarus, he had taken up his abode.

Defiled with dust, and spent by the fatigue of what I had done, and borne, and witnessed, I returned gladly to the dwelling of Heber, where I found the repose I needed. Our demolished tents had already been set up again by the servants of the household, and our scattered effects gathered together in their places.

After the hour of supper was over, we sat long at the tent door, speaking of the events of the day that had closed. Onias was gloomy and thoughtful,

Although he would make no concessions of former opinions, it was evident that he had seen cause for hesitation in the heartiness of the reception which the capital, as if possessed of one mind, had given to the new prophet. No event could be strange or unlikely after that. Judith was full of confidence, and could with difficulty lay so much restraint on the expressions of it as regard for her father taught her to impose. She was certain that now every hope would be speedily fulfilled. The people, by a common impulse, were eager to receive Jesus ; and who could now doubt that he was the Saviour whom God had provided ? Nothing was impossible to him, armed as he now was with the power of God and the consent of the people. Onias heard all she advanced with patience more than usual, and only said that there was still too much of what was dark and unintelligible in the character of Jesus, and uncertain in his purposes, for any undoubting reliance to be placed either in him or in those who thronged him so, seeing that they could hardly pretend to comprehend a person who, to the most learned and penetrating, was a mystery. “ Still new cause of astonishment,” continued Onias, “ has he to-day offered to those most inclined towards him, by language which he used as he first came in sight of the city on the Mount of Olives. It is variously reported, but most say that he lifted up a prophecy against Jerusalem ; that he declared her destruction as approaching ; that the very walls of her defence should be overthrown and torn up from their foundation. What can we make of this ? It surely seems not much like the language of the great restorer, the repairer of breaches ! Had such things come to the ears of that whole shouting multitude, it needs no gift of a divine discernment to know that their shouts would suddenly have fallen, and sounds of a different kind, or silence, taken their place. Heard you aught of that, Julian ? ”

I answered that I had heard of it, and what was yet more, I had myself heard most of the words he had

spoken. They were as he had reported them, and, in the minds of all who heard them, had created such astonishment as he might suppose. "But," I added, "I doubt not it is all by this time forgotten, or remembered only as one of those dark sayings, many of which are reported, even by the disciples of Jesus, to fall from him in his discourses."

"By some," replied Onias, "the saying is not forgotten, but was treasured up as what it behoved the people to know, and hath since been carefully spread abroad. Wherever it has gone, I warrant you it has done little to deepen the place of the prophet in the hearts of those who love the honour and safety of Jerusalem. That he should be the Christ we look for, who prophesies ruin and disaster to Israel, few will be inclined to believe."

"It will take more," I said, "than a single dark saying, variously reported, and which may be interpreted many ways, to shake him from the seat he now holds. The people are with him. He needs at this moment, as I judge, but to speak the word, and Antonia, the gates, the walls, and the Roman camp, nay, Jerusalem itself, are all his; and ere the news could reach Italy, Judea also, and Israel from Dan to Beersheba!"

Judith said nothing as I uttered these things, but her countenance revealed, quite as well as any words could have done, the emotions of joy and hope, and of gratitude to me, that filled her.

"Thou art more of Judith's mind than I had believed," said Onias scornfully; "this momentary triumph of Jesus too much sways thee."

I said I had intended to add what would have shown that, notwithstanding the astonishing spectacle of to-day, I was still, in regard to my opinion of Jesus, what I had been. Though he at this moment, as I could not but think, truly possessed all the power I had given to him, I did not believe he would use it in the way I had hinted, though I confessed I hardly knew what to think or believe.

It appeared to me that his whole character and aim were distinct from, or rather entirely opposed to what belonged to the Christ. Jesus is a prophet only

* * *

The people of Jerusalem are, each day that they have listened to Jesus in the temple, becoming more and more devoted to him. Although the council are as resolved as ever upon his destruction, and by their agents and spies contrive to throw obstacles in his way, and do what they can to stir up the passions of the multitude against him, they meet with little success. The people gather around him, and listen to his instructions ; and going away, they lose all the enmity they had entertained against him in the softening influences of his word. They doubt not that he is indeed a great prophet of God ; and they still hope, and while he lives will hope, that he will declare himself the Christ by the signs they look for. Their honest devotion keeps in awe the rulers and priests.

* * *

Fuller and more exact accounts, my mother, than I have now given of the discourses of Jesus during these few days, shall you ere long receive from the records of Judith, who hears no word—and she has heard all—that she writes not down.

* * *

It was on the second day before the Sabbath, that, leaving the temple, where I had been listening to the discourses of Jesus, I was accosted by a familiar voice, and turning, I beheld the Greek Zeno. While listening to Jesus, I had observed the presence of Zadok and Saturninus, but I had not caught the countenance of the friendly Greek. I greeted him, as you will suppose, with pleasure. He said that he had been two days in Jerusalem, having come up with others, among whom were Philæus and Lysias, with the purpose to see the wonderful man of Nazareth. I expressed my surprise that he had never sought him before, seeing that his desire of knowledge caused

him usually to seek it at every source. At every source, he quickly rejoined, within the limits of Cæsarea. He was strictly a citizen of that city, and rarely strayed from its limits ; and nothing less than a desire to see a man, who seemed rather to be a god descended upon earth than an ordinary mortal, would have brought him so far, except also the circumstance that some Jews, proselytes from his people, accompanied him, through whom he was in hopes to see and converse with Jesus. I asked him if he had succeeded in obtaining access to him. He said that he had ; and that it was while he and his companions were still conversing with him, that the voice had been heard in the temple which yesterday had filled all who were present with astonishment and dread, and startled the city itself. He needed no other evidence, he said, for himself, to be persuaded that Jesus was a messenger from heaven. That voice was of no mortal tone—it was the voice of an angel, or of a god, bearing testimony to Jesus. They who hearing could resist it, would resist God himself, though he appeared in his own form. “I am no Jew,” said Zeno, “but I am a believer in the supreme God, and in the power of the senses to discern one thing from another, and form a just judgment ; and as certain as I am that I, Zeno of Cæsarea, was there in the temple of Jerusalem, and in the presence of Jesus, so certain am I that the voice was the voice of a god, and not of a man ; and so I am sure thought, in their hearts, all who were there. My companions failed to compass the object for which they desired an interview with Jesus—relating, as I understood, to the government in Judea they believed him to be about to establish, and the place or employment they might obtain for themselves under it—but they received convictions strong as my own, that he whom their conversation proved, as they judged, not to be the Messiah, was amply shown to be a messenger of God. That he was not the person they took him for, they thought to be certain from the language which he

used, when he understood their aim, which astonished them out of measure, for he told them that no such favours as they were thinking of could ever flow from him ; but his empire was of a very different kind ; it could be founded only on his death—as a seed sown in the ground could bear fruit only by in a manner first dying, so the good fruits which he as Christ came to bestow upon men, would flow only from his death : he was to be exalted by first suffering and dying, and it must be so with all who came and attached themselves to his cause ; they would be the ministers of great benefit to Israel and mankind, but it would be not by reigning as princes in Israel, but by doing and also suffering in the same manner as he had done ; and much more to the same purpose, which they seemed to comprehend very imperfectly. Of one thing, however, they left him fully assured, that he was not the kind of person or prophet whom they and the nation expect ; that he had no pretensions to that character, but was, at the same time, beyond doubt, a great and wonderful person, highly favoured of God, and if he should be permitted by the priests to fulfil his mission, would confer great benefits on Israel. Their fear was, however, from all they could learn, that the council was bent on his destruction, and would succeed sooner or later in their aim. Such was our interview, continued Zeno, with Jesus. I am truly glad to have seen and heard him ; for no other is like him, either in the form, the countenance, the voice, or the divine wisdom that flows from him as he speaks. I felt compassion for him, Julian, notwithstanding his wonderful power ; for he seemed as one who, in the beginning of life, is oppressed with presentiments of evil which it was impossible for him to escape.”

When Zeno had thus spoken, and we were still walking in the streets of the city, I desired him to accompany me to the dwelling of Heber, which he readily consented to do. There we found all our friends, and with them Saturninus, who escapes, even

for a moment, with difficulty from the duties which now press upon him. Because Heber, who is of the Sadducees, celebrates the Passover with his household on this evening, they were not with us, as at this hour of the day they have commonly been. The preparations of Onias are making for the evening of the morrow.

When supper was ended, we sat again at the tent door, where we conversed together not long, for a spirit of heaviness was upon us which we did not succeed in shaking off, and so caused us early to separate. But when Judith had spoken of the triumph which Jesus had thus obtained over the council through the universal homage of the people, and of the prospect which thus was held out of his continuing to teach the people even though he should never fill any other office, Saturninus said that, for his part, he could not but be under apprehensions for the safety of Jesus even yet. He had observed great activity among those whom he knew to be emissaries of the priests, and had noted that Zadok especially, as he had met and spoken with him, wore upon his countenance an expression that signified a malignant satisfaction with some purpose or plan, whatever it might be, that was employing his thoughts. He had also received from Pilate orders to be vigilant beyond the usual measure, as if tumult was looked for. Yet his suspicions might be unreasonable, and have grown out of his concern for the welfare of an innocent and righteous man.

Onias thought it would by no means be wonderful if a new exasperation existed in the minds of many who had heard him to-day, seeing what the prophecies were which he had uttered.

"But," said I, "if he prophesied destruction to the temple and to Jerusalem, he did not spare himself, since he spoke plainly of his own death by violence."

"Yet," said Judith, "of his rising from the dead also!"

"Yes," said Onias, "he boasts that, being dead, he

will in three days come back again to life. But how plain, if he possesses any such power as could accomplish that, he would first exert it to save himself from the pain of dying! Who would die had he power to deliver himself? And at the last moment, to elude or escape from the hands of the council or Pilate, would display his divine strength even as coming again from the dead. All this shows real weakness and imposture."

"Unless," said Judith, "it should be true that certain ends could be accomplished by his death and immediate resurrection which could not be otherwise, which is conceivable, though we may not be able to say what they are. But of these things it surely is not needful to dispute, for notwithstanding all you have said, Saturninus, I cannot believe in danger one who stands so firmly in the present reverence and just expectations of the people. The council would never dare to injure him, for they would fear the people. I will apprehend, I can apprehend nothing. During the few more days we remain here shall I look to gather new wisdom from his lips, and long do I hope and believe that Israel will rejoice in the light of his truth and life."

We agreed in dismissing our fears. We also determined that on the morrow we would be together in the temple at the time Jesus should arrive from Bethany, which is ever about the third hour.

Our friends then took their departure for the city, while for ourselves we were soon wrapt in sleep.

But while we slept in security and peace, injustice and violence, treachery and revenge, were awake, and, under cover of night, doing their deeds darker than night.

His enemies have triumphed, and Jesus hangs crucified upon Mount Calvary!

Thus it fell out. During the night, while friends were away, the city asleep, none suspecting the designs of the council, Jesus was seized, carried before the council, tried and condemned, the sentence confirmed by Pilate, and then, before the third hour of

the day, and before the knowledge of what had been done could spread abroad, was hurried without the walls and crucified. Grief and indignation are in every heart; for, save the priesthood and the council, there were but few, who, though they believed not in Jesus, did not reverence his virtues and hope that he might show himself more and greater than his miracles had yet proved him. But though angry and disappointed, they raise no tumult, seeing that although, as they judged but yesterday, there was hope in Jesus, and they knew not what he might not be—felt that he might be anything, everything they wished—the event has resolved all their doubts, as it has finally and for ever extinguished all their hopes. They grieve that being innocent he should suffer death to feed the hatred of the rulers, but they acquiesce without further complaint, as they now know that their trust in him was delusive—that he himself was deceived concerning his own character and office, and that they therefore had been placing their reliance on one in whom there was no help.

Judith is overwhelmed with grief. She can hardly believe that he, who but yesterday was borne into the city on the arms of a whole people, should so soon have suffered a cruel and shameful death, crowds of that very people looking on, and uttering approving cries. I assured her that they who witnessed the trial—who even knew of it—were very few, and they for the most part partisans brought together by the rulers. When he was carried forth indeed to the judgment hall of Pilate, and was sent by him out of a feigned respect to Herod, great numbers of the populace were gathered together; but it was not wonderful, as they beheld him wholly in the power of his enemies, submitting to his fate as if he no longer possessed any power of resistance or escape, that they should abandon him as one who, by such helplessness, was shown not to be the person they had taken him for; especially seeing that his own disciples lost their faith in him, and left him to his fate;

and that one of them, bribed by the council—that thereby the rage of the people might be diverted in part at least from themselves—accused him before them, and betrayed to their officers the place of his retreat on the Mount of Olives. All were now alike persuaded—his own disciples not less than others—that they had been strangely deceived.

No sooner had Judith learned this mournful termination of her hopes, than she resolved immediately to return to Beth-Harem, nor did Onias, seeing her unhappiness, seek to detain her; but committing her, accompanied by Ruth, who shared her sorrow, to my guidance, set us forward with the requisite attendants on our way, so that on this same morning we crossed Mount Olivet, and journeyed rapidly homewards.

As we wound along among the valleys of the Jordan—* * *

Here, my kinsmen of Rome, do these letters to Naomi abruptly terminate.

Of the early days passed in Judea they give an exact and careful account: it was with this I promised to supply you. Of the fortunes and the fate of Onias when, upon the crucifixion of Jesus and at the instigation of Herod—now relieved of his most formidable foe and rival, whose death he celebrated on the day of his crucifixion by a banquet given to his friends—he resumed the enterprises that had been interrupted since the first appearing of John, of my own fortunes during the same period, of the part I took in the defence of the city when beleaguered and finally destroyed by the Romans, and the scenes I then witnessed, of my intercourse with the early Christians, and the strange interpretation they came to put upon the character and doctrine of Jesus, and their controversies with the Jews who, like myself, continued to deny him, I will also write, if concerning these things you should show the same desire to be informed.

It is not necessary that I should say aught of the wonderful events that took place in Jerusalem, surpassing all preceding wonders, on that same day that we departed from it, since the writings of the followers of Jesus, in which they are truly recorded, have already become common. All that I shall add is this, that those wonders were witnessed by persons from all parts of the world, and received the same ready assent as the miracles of Jesus. Saturninus, the centurion—and than he no man could have looked on with a calmer mind—doubted not that Jesus was a prophet of God, declared then more especially to be so by the signs of anger or of compassion which nature gave, when they whom he came to serve and bless devoted him to the death of the cross. His rising from the dead also, in agreement with his prediction—a prediction which, when it was uttered, few understood or afterwards remembered—confirmed not only by the testimony of his own disciples who saw him and conversed with him a long time after he came to life, but also by the soldiers who were set as a watch over the sepulchre, he considered as establishing the same thing. Doubtless they sufficiently proved him to be a messenger and prophet of God, at the same time that they failed to prove him the Messiah who had been foretold, for whom Israel had waited so long, and still waits.

THE END.



